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Number

THE ENGLISH

Nonconformity,

As under King *Charles* II. and King *James* II.

TRULY STATED and ARGUED,

By RICHARD BAXTER.

Who earneſtly beſeecheth Rulers, and Clergy, not to Divide and Deſtroy the Land, and caſt their own Souls on the dreadful Guilt and Puniſhment of National *PERJURY*, Lying, deliberate Covenanting to Sin againſt God, corrupt his Church and not amend, nor by Laws or blind Malignity, to reproach faithful Miniſters of Chriſt, and Judge them to Scorn and Beggery, and to Lie and Die in Jails as Rogues, and ſo to ſtrengthen Profaneneſs, Popery and Schiſm, and all for want of *WILLINGNESS* and *PATIENCE* to *READ* and Hear their juſt Defence; while they can ſpend much more time in Sin and Vanity. The Author humbly begs that he and his Books of unconfutable Defence of a Miſtaken perſecuted Cauſe may not be Witneſſes againſt them for ſuch great and wilful Sin to their Condemnation.

Mat. 12. 25. *Every Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf is brought to Deſolation.*

Luk. 13. 3, 5. *Except ye Repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe Periſh.*

The Second Edition, Corrected and Amended.

LONDON, Printed for *Tho. Parkhurſt* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns*, at the lower End of *Cheapſide*. 1690.

The Preface.

IT is agreed on by all real Christians, that Man being made an intelligent Free Agent, not under bruitish necessitating Determination by Objects, is governed by God by the Moral way of Law; that is, by the Signification of his Ruler's Will, making his Duty, and not by meer natural or forcible Motion: And it is agreed that GOD himself is his only absolute Universal Ruler, and his Laws given in Nature and by Revelation are the only Universal Laws, which no Humane Power can abrogate or dispense with: And that Kings and Magistrates are his Ministers for Mens good, and have no Power but from him, and none against him or his Laws; and that it is not Man, but God, by whom we must all be judged to everlasting Reward or Punishment: And therefore that all men must obey God before Men, and must not fear them that can but kill the Body, but him who is able to cast both Soul and Body into Hell.

And it is agreed on by all Sober Christians, that therefore as Subjects must use their own Reason as discerning Self-Governours, to Judge who is their King, and who is an Usurper, and what Actions are commanded or forbidden by Man's Laws; so must they first and chiefly use their own reason, to judge discerningly what Actions are commanded or forbidden by God, and must do accordingly whoever is against it. This Judgment is commonly called Conscience; *which if it err not must be followed, but if it err, it must be rectified: for then it is not God indeed that is obeyed: for God's Law changeth not as Conscience doth: yet to go against such a Conscience is Sin, because it is interpretatively to go against God, while the Man thought this had been God's Will.*

On Supposition of this certain truth, all that ever I yet read that Condemn the Nonconformists, and Preach for their Reproach and Ruine, do confess, that If any one thing required of us as necessary to our Ministry or Communion be Sin, our Nonconformity is but our Duty; and all the whole Ministry of *England*, on whom this was imposed by the Act of Uniformity on *Bartholomew-Day*, 1662. were bound in Conscience to have been Nonconformists: *(Whether also to have all ceased to Preach the Gospel, I leave to their Consideration.) This being the Confession of all that Silence us, and send us to Gaols, and call out for our utter Extirpation, I know no shorter or likelier way, to stop all this burning Wrath, and end our Mischievous Dissentions, than to try whether no one thing required of us be* Sin. *Forty of the things required of Ministers, and Twelve of those required of the Laity, in all Fifty two, I have proposed to Examination, not as accusing the Laws or the Conformists, whatever I think of them; but only rendering briefly the Reasons of our own refusals. And Forty three Points in which many falsly suppose we Conform not (and some may perhaps be found that do not Conform to them all) I have first instanced in, as being such as we oppose not, nor are any Parts of our Nonconformity.*

If all the Justices and Ministers of England, *who censure us, and prosecute us as intolerable Sinners, for our fearing these as Sin, have impartially tryed all these Points, and Reasons, or yet will do, and can find no Sin in any one of the Fifty two, and it prove so indeed, I must say that all the Two Thousand Ministers that in* 1662. *were Silenced, were as unhappy and strangely blinded Men, as most in the World that are true Christians; that after all their Study and Prayers, they should affright themselves into so calamitous a State, against all the reason of their Worldly Interests, as well as against the welfare of the Church, and their Duty to God:* 2. *But I must say, past doubt, that the accusing Clergy are deeply guilty of it, who these Twenty one years have no better*

answered

answered the Reasons of our fear, nor used more Wisdom and Charity for our just Conviction. For our Consciences are of such a temper, as will not be convinced with a Scorn or a Jail, nor take all Writings or Words as satisfactory, that are poured out with supercilious Confidence, and called Satisfactory *by the Self-esteeming Authors.*

I am told by divers, That I have written enough already on these Subjects, were it only my first and second Plea for Peace, *my* Treatise of Episcopacy, *and that* of Concord, *and my* Apology for our Preaching. *And they say, You must expect to do no good, nor so much as to be read by Adversaries, much less with Diligence and impartial Willingness to know the Truth; but contrarily to be* hated, *and accused of some odious Crime, and laid in Jail, among Malefactors till you die; and a Prison will be more grievous to one in your pain and languishing than to another. On the other side, I have been long importuned to give an account of the Reasons of our Nonconformity: I have by Bishops been reproved for not doing it: Lords and Persons of great Quality have been perswaded, that we keep up a dangerous Schism in the Land, to the cherishing of Discontents and Sedition, only for things which we confess to be indifferent, and no Sin: the Laws accuse us: The numerous Addresses of Counties, Cities and Corporations, revile us as the Nurses of Rebellion: No small number of Preachers plead for our Ruine on the same Supposition, and tell the People that it is no Sin that we stick at, but Humour, Pride and Faction make us disobedient Schismaticks, without any reason for what we do. The Jails are fill'd with Nonconformists: Nine Ministers are now in* Newgate, *and many more in other Places. And almost all of them Mulct and Fined in far more than ever they were worth. Their Goods and Books taken by Distress: They are fain to fly or abscond that are not in Prison: Their Wives and Children in Distress and Want: They are judged by the Justices unworthy so much as to be summoned to*

Answer

Anſwer for themſelves before they are judged, or to be heard Plead their own Cauſe, or to know and queſtion their Accuſers and Witneſſes; But as I my ſelf was Diſtreined of all my Goods and Books on five Convictions before ever I heard of any Accuſation, or ſaw a Judge, ſo is it with many others, and more. In a word, Lords, Knights and Clergy-men take us for unſufferable Perſons in the Land, unfit for Humane Society, Enemies to Monarchy, Obedience and Peace, and Corporations promiſe to chooſe ſuch Parliament Men as are for our Extirpation. And all this is for our Nonconformity, which they all confeſs to be our Duty if it be any Sin that by the Impoſitions is required of us.

And if ſo ſmall and eaſie a task as proving one or many ſuch Sins required, would recover the Charity and Juſtice of all theſe Men, and ſave themſelves and the Land from the guilt of Proſecuting and Oppreſſing the Innocent, and Condemning Men for Obedience to God, and driving conſcionable and loyal Perſons out of the Land, or overwhelming them with falſe Accuſations, becauſe of other Mens Treaſons or Sedition, is not he that will forbear his Part and Duty in ſo dreadful a Caſe, a greater Sinner than he that when the City is on fire, will not do his beſt to quench it; or that will not put out his hand to ſave a Friend or Child in fire or Water, for fear of ſome trouble to himſelf?

I did in my firſt Plea *for* Peace, *only name the Matters which we dare not Conform to, and durſt not give the Reaſons of our Fear and Nonconformity: Whereupon many ſince have importuned me for thoſe Reaſons, as without which I could not expect that Men ſhould underſtand our Caſe. Why ſhould I deny this? Is it through deſpair that Rulers and Clergymen will not regard Reaſon, or will not bear it, but anſwer it with Contempt or Priſons? That is to accuſe them of ſuch Injuſtice, Uncharitableneſs, and Inhumanity as I muſt not accuſe any of that do not by open Practice accuſe themſelves.*

Is it left I should suffer by them? My Life and Labours have been long Vowed to God: He hath preserved my Life, and succeeded my Labours above forty Years, by a continued course of remarkable Providence, beyond my own and other Mens expectations. What he hath thus given me, is doubly due to his Service; which hath been still so good to me, that it hath made even a painful life, a continual pleasure. He never failed or forsook me: I dare not ask any longer life of him, but for more and longer Service. And if my Service be at an end, why not my Life also? If I refuse his Service, I invite God to cut off my Life: And what Service else can I now do? I have neither leave nor strength to Preach. I have these fourteen Months been disabled so much as to go to any Publick or Private Church, or hear a Sermon. My Body with pain and languid feebleness is a daily heavy load to me. I suffer more by it every day, than from all my Enemies in the World. And shall I be guilty of the heinous Sin of the Omission of my Duty in a time of such urgent and crying Necessity, to save so calamitous a Life, which I am still looking when it endeth? Is not a Prison as near a Way to Heaven as my own House? I will not do as those Christians that Cyprian *writes to Comfort, who were greatly troubled at Death, because they died not by Martyrdom. But I take a Death for so publick and pressing a Cause of* Truth, Love, Innocency *and* Peace, *to be a more comfortable sort of Martyrdom, than theirs that were Burnt in* Smithfield *for denying the* Real Presence, *and such like; and if God will so end such a painful Life when Sickness and Natural decay is ready to end it, I hope he will teach me neither to repine, nor to be utterly unthankful.*

And as to the uncertainty of success, He that observeth the Wind shall not sow; God must be trusted to bless our Work while we Plant and Water; It's my part to do my Duty, and God's part to give success: I commend my self living and dying into the hands of my Creator and Redeemer, and end this Preface in the words of St. Paul, *Act.* 20. 23, 24. Bonds and afflictions abide me: But none of these things

move

move me, neither count I my life dear unto my ſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtifie the Goſpel of the Grace of God.

Richard Baxter.

London, Sept. 28. 1683.

An

An Instance of the ACCUSATIONS which call for our Defence; (besides those in the Act for *Banishment from Corporations*, &c.)

Devon ss. *Ad General Quarterial. Session. Pacis Dom. Regis tent. apud Castr.* Exon. *in & pro Comitat. præd. Secundo die* Octobris, *Anno Regni Dom. nostri* Caroli *Secundi Dei gratia Angliæ, Scotiæ, Franciæ, & Hiberniæ Regis, Fidei Defensor.* &c. *Tricessimo quinto, Annoque Dom.* 1683.

WE have been so abundantly convinced of the Seditious and Rebellious Practices of the Sectaries and Phanaticks, who through the Course of above One hundred years since we were first infested with 'em, have scarce afforded this unhappy Kingdom any interval of rest from their horrid Treasons, as that we must esteem 'em, not only the open Enemies of our Established Government, but to all the common Principles of Society and Humanity it self. Wherefore, that we may prevent their Horrid Conspiracies for the time to come, and secure (as much as in us lies) our most Gracious KING and the GOVERNMENT from the Fury and Malice of 'em, we resolve to put the Severest of the Laws (which we find too Easie and Gentle, unless enlivened by a vigorous Execution) in force against 'em.

1. We Agree and Resolve, in every Division of this County, to require sufficient Sureties for the good Abearing and Peaceable Behaviour of all such as we may justly suspect, or that we can receive any credible Information against, that they have been at any Conventicles and Unlawful Meetings, or at any Factious

or Seditious Clubs; or that have by any Diſcourſes diſcovered themſelves to be diſaffected to the preſent Eſtabliſhed Government, either in Church or State; or that have been the Authors or Publiſhers of any Seditious Libels; or that ſhall not in all things duely conform themſelves to the preſent Eſtabliſhed Government.

2. Becauſe we have a ſort of Falſe Men, and more perfidious than profeſſed Phanatiques, who either wanting Courage to appear in their own ſhape, or the better to bring about their Treaſonable Deſigns, privately Aſſociate with, and encourage the Seditious Clubs of the Sectaries, and with them Plot heartily againſt the Government; and yet, that they may paſs unſuſpected, ſometime appear in the Church with a falſe ſhew of Conformity, only to ſave their Money, and the better to ſerve their Faction: that we may (if poſſible) diſtinguiſh and know all ſuch dangerous Enemies, we will ſtrictly require all Church-wardens and Conſtables at all our Monthly Meetings, to give us a full account of all ſuch as do not every Sunday reſort to their own Pariſh-Churches, and are not at the beginning of Divine Service, and do not behave themſelves Orderly and Soberly there, obſerving all ſuch decent Ceremonies as the Laws enjoyn: And that they likewiſe Preſent unto us the Names of all ſuch as have not received the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in their own Pariſh-Churches Thrice in the Year.

3. Being fully ſatisfied, as well by the clear Evidence of the late Horrid PLOT, as by our own long and ſad Experience, That the Nonconformiſt Preachers are the Authors and Fomenters of this Peſtilent Faction, and the implacable Enemies of the Eſtabliſhed Government, and to whom the late Execrable Treaſons, which have had ſuch diſmal effects in this Kingdom, are principally to be imputed, and who by their preſent obſtinate refuſing to Take and Subſcribe an Oath and Declaration, *That they do not hold it Lawful to take up ARMS againſt the KING, and that they will not endeavour any Alteration of Government either in Church or State*; do neceſſarily enforce us to conclude, that they are ſtill ready to engage themſelves; (if not actually engaged) in ſome Rebellious Conſpiracy againſt the KING, and to invade and Subvert

vert his GOVERNMENT: wherefore we resolve in every Parish of this County, to leave strict Warrants in the hands of all Constables, for the Seizing of such Persons And as an encouragement to all Officers and others, that shall be instrumental in the apprehending of any of them, so as they may be brought to Justice, we will give and allow Forty shillings, as a Reward, for every Nonconformist Preacher that shall be so secured. And we Resolve to Prosecute them, and all other such Dangerous Enemies of the Government, and common Absenters from Church, and Frequenters of CONVENTICLES, according to the Directions of a Law made in the Five and Thirtieth Year of the Reign of Queen *ELIZABETH*, Entituled, *An Act for the keeping Her Majesties Subjects in due OBEDIENCE.*

Lastly, That we may never forget the infinite Mercies of Almighty God, in the late Wonderful Deliverance of our Gracious KING, and his Dearest BROTHER, and all His Loyal Subjects, (who were designed for a Massacre) from the Horrid Conspiracy of the Phanatiques, and their Accomplices; and that we may perpetuate as well our own Thankfulness, as their Infamy, that the Generations to come may know their Treachery, and avoid and never trust men of such Principles more; and also, that we our selves may perform our publick Duty to Almighty God, before we enter upon the publick Service of our Countrey: We Order, Resolve, and Agree, with the Advice and Concurrence of the Right Reverend Father in God, our much Honoured and Worthy Lord BISHOP, to give and bestow for the Beautifying of the Chappel in the Castle of *EXON*, and for the erecting of decent Seats there, Ten Pounds: And we will likewise give and continue Six Pounds to be paid yearly to any one of the Church of *Exon*, whom the said Lord BISHOP shall appoint, to read the DIVINE SERVICE, with the Prayers lately appointed for the day of Thanksgiving on the Ninth of *September* last, and to Preach a Sermon exhorting to OBEDIENCE, in the said Chappel, on the first day of every general Quarter-Sessions of the Peace held in the said Castle, to begin precisely at Eight of the Clock in the Morning.

And may the Mercies of Heaven (which are infinite) always protect our Religious and Gracious KING, his Dearest BROTHER, and every Branch of that ROYAL FAMILY; and may all the Treasonable Conspiracies of those Rebellious Schismaticks be always thus happily prevented.

Hugo Vaughan, Cler. Pacis Com. præd.

That the continued Care of His Majesties Justices of the Peace for the County of DEVON, *for the Safety of His Majesties Sacred Person, the Preservation of the Publick Peace, and advancement of true Religion, may be fuller known, and have a better Effect; I do hereby Order and Require all the* CLERGY *of my Diocess within the County of* Devon, *deliberately to publish this Order, the next Sunday after it shall be tendred to them.*

THO. EXON.

(Now Archbishop of *York.*)

THE

THE

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THE

THE True CASE OF THE English Nonconformity,

In a DIALOGUE between

A Silenced MINISTER and a LAWYER.

CHAP. I.

The Introductory Conference,

Lawyer. *SIR, the danger of the Kings Dominions by our Irreligious Contentions about Religion, poſſeſſeth the obſervers with juſt indignation; but all know not on whom to lay the blame; ſome lay it on the Biſhops, and ſome on the Nonconformiſts, and ſome on both: I am unwilling to wrong any; but when I think of our danger, and hear that it is but Ceremonies, and things indifferent for which you break the Law, and make a Schiſm in the Church, and weaken us by diviſions; I cannot but think you deeply guilty.*

Miniſter. How long have you ſo judged?

L. *Theſe twenty years, ever ſince you were put out.*

M. Did you ever by Reading and Conference with thoſe that

you censure, acquaint your self truly with their Case.

L. *I have seen some of your Books, but I have not talkt much of these matters with any of you, but I read and hear from the Doctors of the Church what you are, and what you hold.*

M. Will you take us to be the just reporters what they are and hold?

L. *No, you are Adversaries and partial.*

M. And are not they as much so to us? Is not every man fitter to profess his own Faith than his Adversary is? And have you done well to judge before you heard and tryed? Shall Judges do so on the Bench? Have you not all these years, continued guilty of false judging and uncharitableness, and that against a great number of the innocent? And if you every day prayed for forgiveness but as you forgive, even an enemy and real injury, what have you done all this while in condemning the guiltless?

L. *Why have you not in Writing given the World just satisfaction if you are guiltless? What sin have you proved to be in the Conformity required of you? I see no such proof.*

M. You know what penalties the Law layeth on any that deprave the Common-Prayer-Books, and that all are Excommunicate *ipso facto*, that do but affirm any thing to be against Gods Word, in any Office of your Church Government, in any Word or Ceremony in your Liturgy, *&c. Can.* 5. 6, 7, 8. And you know what follows Excommunication here. And you know that till of late years the Press was shut up to us: But have you seriously read and studied what is written by us? I my self have told you; 1. In a Book called *A Plea for Peace*, what things they be which Nonconformists take to be sinful in Conformity, and how great and hainous the sin is which they fear,; and what separation is unlawful and what is necessary. 2. In a full Treatise of Episcopacy I have shewed what Episcopacy we are for, and what we are against, and why, and what Antiquity held hereabout, and what we have to say to most of the Learned Men that have written for that Diocesan form, which we cannot approve. 3. In an Apology, I have proved it our duty to Preach, though forbidden, as far as we are able, and mens necessities require it. 4. In a second *Plea for Peace*, I have fully given the World an account of our Doctrine, of Magistrates Power and Subjects Duties in matters Civil and Ecclesiastical, *&c.* 5. In a *Treatise*

of

of Church Concord, I have fully proved that the Primitive simplicity in things divine, few, plain and sure is the only possible matter of Universal Christian Unity and Concord. I know not of any one of these that are Answered, or any thing like an Answer to them written, save that to some part of the first, some meer impertinent noise was made by some one that is confuted.

L. *We that have other Employment have not leisure to read so many tedious Writings: Tell us your Case in a few words if you would have us understand you.*

M. Did you get your skill in Law by so easie and so short a Study? Or is any kind of Knowledge so easily got, where Controversy hath drowned the matter in contradicting words. You know that it is multitudes of Volumes that are written on the other side: And it's impossible to Answer them all in a few words: And if they be unanswered, they will say, we have done nothing. But had you as seriously studied but one or two of these Books, (*e.g.* my first *Plea for Peace*, and *Treatise of Episcopacy*) as you do Law Books, I scarce think you would have been long unsatisfied. But if indeed you have no time to hear, read and study, say also you have no time to know or judge: And no more censure what you know not.

L. *How comes your Case to be so little understood if you have done so much to open and justifie it?*

M. You may know by your self. 1. Men study their own matters in which they feel themselves concerned; and as for ours they think they are not much concerned to know them. 2. At least not at the rate of any hard and diligent study, which neither love nor necessity leads them to. 3. Most are strangers to us, even they that dwell near us, and converse not with us. 4. The rather because that as we are out of the rising way, and are under publick discountenance, and banished from Corporations, and much from converse with men of publick place and interest, so our familiarity is become fearful, lest it brings those that are familiar with us into suspicion. 5. And they converse with those that through Ignorance or Malice do describe us, and our Cause and Books, as they would have all men think of us; and it is not good manners or safe to contradict them. And so the notice of our Mind and Case must be received, not from us, but from our accusers. Do you observe this method in *West-*

minſter Hall. 6. And how much intereſt can byaſs mens judgments, common experience too eaſily tells us: They that are uppermoſt ſeldom want applauders, nor dejected men accuſers. Every School-boy can tell you out of *Ovid. de Triſt. Dum fueris fœlix multos numerabis amicos: Nullus ad amiſſas ibit amicus opes. Aſpicis ut veniunt ad candida tecta Columbæ: Accipiet nullas ſordida turris aves.* A few ſeriôus Believers that look for a more righteous and important judgment after death, do not loſe the treaſure of Truth and Innocency in Shipwrack, it being as near them as themſelves: But *cætera fortunæ, non mea turba fuit.*

L. *But if there be no cauſe, how come you to be ſo odious to others?*

M. If you that dwell in *England* cannot anſwer that your ſelf, when you have taken a ſurvey of the quality and lives of them that hate us, and them that they hate, and of their diſtinct intereſts and motives, I will not anſwer it to you.

L. *But whence is it that Clergy-men of the ſame Profeſſion ſo much diſagree?*

M. The former anſwer ſhall ſerve to this: Whence is it that the Clergy by diſagreement about *Opinions* and *Superiority* have broken the whole Chriſtian World into that ſtate of doleful diviſion, in which in *Aſia*, *Africa* and *Europe*, it lyeth to this day? If you know not read the Hiſtory of the Church.

L. *Which part of you ſoever is guilty, the guilt muſt needs be very hainous, when the Preachers of the Goſpel of Love and Peace, ſo hate each other, and perſwade all to do the like, and will not let the World be quiet.*

M. No doubt but Love and Concord are ſo great *Duties* and *Bleſſings*, and there is ſo much of Satan in the contrary, that you can hardly aggravate the guilt too much. If it were better for that man that offendeth or ſtumbleth one of the leaſt, that he had never been born, or he had been caſt with a milſtone about his neck into the Sea; what a caſe are theſe Church Paſtors in that tear the Church, and Preach down Love, and harden thouſands in Ungodlineſs and Cruelty, and endanger the loſs of Religion to the Land.

L. *If I knew which of you had done moſt for Love and Peace, and leaſt againſt them, I ſhould know to whom to impute our troubles.*

M. We

M. We justifie not our selves, and we leave others to their judge: We have deserved worse from God, than we have suffered. But we must say; 1. That we impose not our words, our books, our forms, our different rites on any, nor would do, by violence, had we power: We put no Oaths, Subscriptions, Covenants, Professions or Practices doubtful upon any: To them that tell us we did so in former times, we still say, let them use no other so but those that used them so, and we are satisfied: I know not six in *England* of all the present Nonconformists that did so: We are not for Silencing or Imprisoning them, nor forbidding them to worship God: In 1660 we motioned no change of Church Government, which should take down any of their Lordships Maintenance or Episcopal Power, but only Arch-Bishop *Ushers* Draught of the antient Episcopacy, and thankfully accepted what the King then granted in his Declaration of Ecclesiastical Affairs. 2. We never craved Preferment of them, but leave to serve Christ and his Church in the Office which we were Vowed to. We certainly knew what impediments hindered the desired Unity, and what divisions must needs follow were they not removed, which by others they might easily have been, without cost or danger. We Pleaded, we Wrote, we Petitioned, and Beg'd for Peace, even for that which the King had granted: And what could we do more? Since then above twenty years we have laboured as we could, sometime to few, and sometime to more; and have patiently lived upon Charity, and suffered — I need not tell you what.

L. *But why could not you Conform to the Law as well as they?*

M. 1. Can men believe what others list because they bid us? Is there nothing that you or they would refuse if it be but commanded you? What use have we for a Law of God then? If we must disobey it as oft as we are bid, that were to renounce God, and all Religion and Salvation. And we have not our own understandings at command; we have offered them our Oaths these twenty years, that we would obey them in all, except at the rate of sinning and damnation.

2. And if we had done as they did we must have profest our Assent and Consent to all things contained in and prescribed by a Book which we never saw: For so did we suppose above seven thousand men, the Book not coming out of the Press till about the day

day that they were so to Assent to it, *Aug.* 24. so that no doubt they did it on an implicite trust in others; except the few that were in or near *London*: This fully shews that, though almost all the nine thousand or more Ministers that were in possession when the King came in, did before conform to the way of the Directory, and not to the Common-Prayer Book, yet there was a great latent difference between the seven thousand that conformed, and the two thousand that did not.

L. *But seeing all the stress lyeth upon the question, Whether it be only things* Lawful, indifferent *or* good, *which you refuse, or any thing which God forbiddeth: I pray tell me plainly, what it is that you take to be sinful in the Conformity required? And what it is that you would have as necessary in its stead.*

M. I will tell you on these Conditions; 1. That you pardon me for repeating here what I have already written. 2. That you bring not your self a Conscience so laxe as will take nothing for sin, which men use to make light of, though God forbid it, and then think that our Consciences should be as wide as yours. 3. That we may premise the things *presupposed as agreed on.*

CHAP. II. *The things presupposed as agreed on.*

L. *WHat are the Agreements which you presuppose?*

M. These following.

I. That God is the Absolute Soveraign Ruler, and hath made in Nature, and in the Sacred Scripture, Universal Laws for the whole Church and World: And that Kings are His Subjects and Officers, and have no Power but what He giveth them directly or indirectly, and therefore none against Him; no more than a Constable against the Sovereign Power; and that he and all men are bound to obey Gods Laws, whoever are against it or forbid it.

L. *I cannot deny this, without denying God to be God, and the Law of Nature and Scripture to be His Law and Word.*

M. II. That next to his Government, God in order of Nature and Time made *Self-Government* and *Family-Government* before the Government of Republicks, Kingdoms or Cities: And that publick Polity hath no Authority to abrogate *Self Government* or *Family-Government*, but only to over rule and use them for the common good and safety.

L. *This*

L. *This is undeniable, if you ſtate the Governments preſuppoſed a right.*

M. III. That it belongs to *Self-Government* to diſcern by reaſon, whether the Commands of Men be againſt the Commands of God or not, which we call *Judicium diſcretionis*, by which all men muſt guide their actions.

L. *Shall every man be a judge of the Law, whether it be juſt and good? How unfit are the vulgar to judge of Laws?*

M. They are no publick judges to decide the caſe for other men, nor doth their judgment reſtrain or bind the Magiſtrate; nor if they judge amiſs will it juſtifie themſelves, or ſuſpend the execution of the Law againſt them. But if they muſt not have the foreſaid diſcerning judgment to guide their actions, it will follow; 1. That they are not governed, nor muſt obey as Men by Reaſon and Free-will, but as Brutes. 2. That Kings have Abſolute Power againſt God, and muſt be obeyed in all that they command, *e. g.* if it be to curſe or blaſpheme, or renounce God or Chriſt, to command the Subject to live in Murder, Adultery Perjury, *&c.* and ſo to abrogate the Law of Nature. 3. It followeth, that there is no God (that is, a Supream Ruler) but the King. 4. And I pray you tell me what you will have the Subjects do in caſe of Uſurpation or Competition for the Government, as between the Houſes of *York* and *Lancaſter*, *Jane* and Queen *Mary*, *&c.* when one ſaith, *fight for me*, and the other, *fight for me*. If the Subject have not a judgment of diſcretion to know which is his rightful Sovereign, the King muſt be forſaken: He that will ſtand to the command of another, muſt judge who his Commander is.

L. *And will you have Infants and Idiots judge of their Parents commands; Or Children in their minority?*

M. 1. Infants and Idiots have not the uſe of Reaſon, and ſo far are to be ruled by force as Brutes: And Children in that meaſure as they are ſhort of reaſon. But 2. If they come to reaſon, and the King command them one thing, (*e. g.* what Church to go to) and their Parents the contrary, would you not have them judge which they muſt obey. 3. Much more if Parents ſhould command them to ſin againſt God, to Steal, Lye, Murder, Blaſpheme, and Curſe the King, *&c.* ſurely they muſt judge as far as they are able.

L. *I cannot deny it, proceed in your presuppositions.*

M. IV. That no men have power to command us to damn our Souls, or to do, any thing that tendeth to it.

L. *None will deny you that; but perhaps some things may cease to be sin, and dangerous if commanded.*

M. None can dispense with the Laws of God, but we grant that some things that are unlawful by some accident or circumstance may become a duty when commanded, when the good of Obedience, Order and Concord therein, weighs down against the accident: It may be a sin to go on Warfare before one is commanded, and a duty when he is commanded. It is a fault in a Servant to go before he is sent, and a duty after.

V. We presuppose that deliberate Lying is a sin.

L. *Is there any one doubts of that?*

M. If they do not, our Case will soon be decided. But indeed many deny it. The *Jansenists* name you many Jesuit Casuists: And *Grotius de Jure Belli*, and Bishop *Jer. Taylor*, deny that Lying is any sin when it is profitable, and wrongeth none; as in a Physician to tice down a Medicine.

L. *And what have you to say to the contrary?*

M. I must not stay to dispute all such matters with you: I have fully answered it in my Catechism on the Ninth Commandment. Briefly this may satisfie you: No ones private good must be sought by a means that would destroy all Humane Trust and Converse: But if you give men leave to lye when they think it needful or harmless, it will destroy all Humane Trust and Converse: For almost all will think their lyes are profitable. And we have had Learned, Moderate Conformists that have trusted to this Argument, and openly defended it: If Knaves would take my Purse, I may defend my self with my Hands: *Ergo*, If they would deprive me of my Maintenance and Ministry, I may defend my self with my Tongue.

L. *And how do you answer them?*

M. That no man must defend himself by means which will do more hurt than his Ministry or Life is worth: But to let men loose so to lying is such; and more forbidden of God than hand-defence: And sin ever doth more hurt than good.

VI. We may suppose also that Perjury is unlawful, and would much more destroy all Mutual Trust, and consequently Humane Converse.

VII. And

VII. And we may ſuppoſe that he that either commandeth or perſwadeth others to be perjured, or that openly juſtifieth their perjury, by telling them that it is no perjury, or no ſin, is guilty of their perjury.

VIII. And we ſuppoſe that to draw whole Churches and Kingdoms into perjury, by force, perſwaſion, example or juſtification of it, and telling them that they need not repent of it, is one of the heinouſeſt ſins that man can commit, except making it the very Mark or Stigma, without which none may be Magiſtrates, Miniſters or Freemen.

L. *No one I hope will deny any of this.*

M. IX. We preſuppoſe that all Vows, Oaths, Covenants, Profeſſions, impoſed by Superiours, muſt be taken in that ſenſe in which they any way expound them, without forcing them either by a laxe or an over-rigid interpretation: But if they do not otherwiſe expound them, they muſt be taken in the ſenſe as thoſe words are commonly uſed and underſtood, by ſuch as treat of the ſubject which they belong to.

L. *You have ſo cautelouſly expreſt it, that I cannot contradict you.*

M. I muſt not be tedious in writing the ſame things oft. If any doubt whether our expoſitions of Oaths and Subſcriptions be not over-ſtrict or rigid, I pray you read the words of Dr. *Sanderſon*, cited by me in the end of my firſt *Plea for Peace*, and know that we ſtand to his rules of expoſition.

X. We may ſuppoſe that, ſeeing repenting and amending is the condition of forgiveneſs, to make a Covenant in any ſin that we will never repent and amend, is ſo heinous a crime, as is next to the renouncing of Pardon and Salvation: And in National guilt and danger deliberately to covenant that we will never endeavour any amendment of the Nations ſin, is next to begging Gods Curſe on the Land; *e. g.* If a man were a Fornicator and Perjured, and the Land commonly guilty of the ſame, he that would make a Bargain or Covenant, and that deliberately, that he will never amend, nor ever endeavour to amend the Land or any other—What would you think of that mans caſe?

L. *What ſhould I think but that he is a Monſter and miſerable Wretch? But what's that to us? I hope there are none ſuch in*

 England,

England, *that worse than Witches, would sell themselves and the Nation to the Devil.*

M. I pray over-run me not in the application: I do but tell you what I suppose we are agreed in: I shall tell you after why I speak it.

XI. I also suppose that bare Possession proveth not a Bishop or Pastors right to the place and power which he claimeth: Nor is any disseized of his right by being disseized of separable accidents.

L. *That's true: But what use you'll make of it I know not.*

M. XII. Lastly, I must desire you to remember, that as we profess to stick at nothing but sin against God (and not things indifferent, as we are slandered,) so if *but one* of all the imposed Acts of Conformity be certainly sinful, and if but *one* of all the Arguments which I shall use do prove it so, not only the two thousand that were ejected, were bound to be Nonconformists, but also all the English Ministry, and the Act of Uniformity (if Conformity be sin) did virtually, though not actually, turn out all the Clergy at once, because all were bound rather to resign than sin.

L. *The truer and more dreadful the consequence is, the hardlier will I believe the antecedent, till I needs must.*

M. You cannot expect that we affirm it: For, 1. We know how cautelous we must be in meddling with the case of other men: Let them judge themselves who are called to it. 2. And I told you before what the Law threatens, and the Canons, against them that affirm any of the Impositions to be sinful; much more that shall so deeply accuse the Laws. 3. But sure no Law or Reason forbiddeth men to fear sinning against God themselves, nor to tell the World what it is that they fear, and why they dare not do it, without accusing any other.

CHAP. II. *What our Nonconformity is not I*

M. BEfore I tell you wherein our Nonconformity doth consist, I must tell you wherein it doth not consist, to avoid the false reports that commonly go abroad against us.

And therefore I must premise that I pretend not to tell you the opinion of every odd person that Conformeth not; no more than you justifie all that Conform in all their opinions. I think few doubt

doubt not but that ſome Atheiſts, Sadduces, Infidels, Hobbiſts, Socinians, if not Papiſts, outwardly Conform: Yet we charge not their Errours on the Church; and ſo on the other ſide. But thoſe that were called by the King, and one another, 1660, and 1661, to treat of Concord, and that Aſſembled at *Sion Colledge*, and elſewhere about it, did openly make known their minds: And I think they meddled not againſt any of theſe things following, by any accuſation of them as ſinful.

I. They never denied the Lawfulneſs of a Form of Prayer or a Liturgy: Though ſome falſly ſo accuſe them.

II. They denied not the ſoundneſs of the *matter* of *Prayer*, contained in the Form of the Engliſh Liturgy, in the main: They thought it a good Book, and the making of it a great Reformation, and honoured the excellent men that made it; but they thought it not ſuch as could not, or ſhould not in any thing be amended, or that all might ſay was without fault.

III. They thought not the *Impoſition* of it a reaſon ſufficient to prove it unlawful for them to uſe it were there no more.

IV. They offered to uſe it when amended, and if that could not be had, they told you in their Reply, their purpoſe rather to communicate in the uſe of it, than not at all, and to have uſed all the lawful part themſelves, if they might be ſuffered in their publick places and Miniſtry on ſuch terms.

V. They never accuſed the uſe of *Holy-days*, as days of Thankſgiving to God, for giving ſuch Holy Apoſtles to the Church, and whoſe memory we honourably commemorate.

VI. They never accuſed our *Kneeling* at the *Lords Supper* as unlawful, but only the *caſting Godly* perſons from Communion for not uſing it, when they take it to be ſin. About the *Kneeling* the old Nonconformiſts were not of one mind; ſome thought that every *objectum motivum* of Adoration was forbidden that was a Creature: But others ſaid, that every creature in the World may be ſuch an object: Our meat is *objectum motivum* when we pray for a Bleſſing on it. If I ſee the Relicts or Picture of a Friend that I wronged while he was alive, I may well be moved by it to beg pardon of God. All his works muſt move me to adore and praiſe him: But we may not make any Image *objectum terminativum*, or *ad quod*, to which we direct our Divine Worſhip, as a Medium of our ſending it to God. The only great difficulty

about this is from the Argument of ſcandalous hardening the Papiſts that live among us: Though indeed our Doctrine avoideth that ſcandal.

VII. They never accuſed the Ceremony of laying the hand on the Book and kiſſing it in taking an Oath.

VIII. They never ſpake againſt the Ring in Marriage.

IX. They meddled not with the Surplice, Tippet, Hood, Rochet, Cope, but only the caſting men out of the Miniſtry that dare not uſe them, thinking them unlawful: Though we juſtifie them not.

X. They accuſed not all ſignificant uſe of the Croſs, but only that in Baptiſm it ſeemed to have all, or moſt of the nature of a Humane Sacrament of the Covenant of Grace, as it is expounded in the Liturgy and Canon.

XI. They ſpake not againſt Epiſcopacy, as it is a preſidency among and over Presbyters differing in Degree, and not in Office, called ORDER, and that in a Church of the loweſt Species.

XII. They oppoſed not Arch-Biſhops as over many ſuch Churches and Biſhops, nor Dioceſans, as Arch-Biſhops ruling but by Gods Word.

XIII. They ſaid nothing againſt Metropolitans, Patriarchs, Lay-Chancellors, Commiſſaries, Officials, Surrogates, Arch-Deacons, *&c.* as Officers of the King, appointed to do nothing (beſides the Sacred Miniſtry, if they be Clergy-men) but what belongs to Magiſtracy.

XIV. They ſaid nothing againſt any promiſe of Obedience to them only in the capacities, and in the exerciſe of the power forementioned.

XV. Much leſs did they ever oppoſe or queſtion Swearing to the King, according to the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy: And I, with divers others alſo, being (for ſome ends) entered as his Chaplains in Ordinary, took alſo that Oath of Fidelity which the Kings Houſhold Servants take.

XVI. We never were for any diſhonouring of Kings by publick Excommunications, much leſs by Subjects or Forreigners, whom Kings never choſe to be their Paſtors; but only in caſe of neceſſity, for ſuch a denial of Sacramental Communion to them, as Biſhop *Andrews* in *Tortura Torti*, and Biſhop *Bilſon* plead for; which is but to forbear our ſelves a ſinful act.

XVII. We

XVII. We never pleaded for any Elders (or Chancellors) power of the Keys, who are but Lay-men.

XVIII. We never held that Magistrates are bound to add their force by the Sword, to the censures of the Church as such, and to punish men more because the Church hath by Excommunication cast them out, or because they are not reconciled.

XIX. We never thought that things indifferent do become unlawful to us, because the Magistrate commandeth them.

XX. We never held that the Scripture is a particular Rule, commanding every accident and circumstance about Gods Worship, but only a general Rule (requiring all to be done in Love and Peace, and to Edification, and decently, *&c.*) in those circumstances which must be some way determined, and God hath left to variable Humane determination: Such as are Time, Place, Utensils, Translations, Sections, Metres, Tunes, Methods and Words in Preaching and Prayer, Habit, Gesture, and many such.

XXI. We never held it unlawful to do one of these actions, though it were by mistake unlawfully commanded; *e. g.* If the Rulers prescribe a Time, Place, Metre, Tune, *&c.* unfit, if it be not so bad as to overthrow the ends and use of the Worship, the fault of the Commander will not disoblige us from the duty of obeying. And whereas some argue, that *no man hath authority to sin*, ergo, *we are not bound to obey that which is no act of Authority:* I answer, Rulers have authority to command that which is good, though not in a faulty manner; and when we cannot do the good without the faulty manner, it is their fault, and not ours: *e. g.* If an inconvenient Time, Place, Text, Tune, *&c.* be chosen, the Union and Concord which is held by agreeing in those Modes is necessary: He that will not joyn in them, cannot joyn in the Worship. So that we obey the Ruler or Guide as a determiner of the means of Concord, which is necessary, and not *sub ratione erroris*, as *misdetermining*, though in that which is *misdetermined*. If a Master bid his Servant go at an unseasonable time about his work, it's his duty to go at that time. We never pray without some fault in the manner, and yet must rather do it so than not at all. The mistaken Ruler *bids us not sin:* It's *his sin* to choose a mis-circumstance; and it is not his *own action* that he *bids us do*, but ours: And it's to us a lawful circumstance, because

becauſe neceſſary to Concord, and commanded though miſtakingly.

XXII. We never held it unlawful to ioyn with a Church or Miniſter that hath ſome faults, both Perſonal, and in their acts of Worſhip; as if all that joyned were guilty of all the faults there committed; no not though we knew before-hand that ſome falſe Doctrine would be uttered, or fault committed: Elſe we muſt ſeparate from all the world, and all from us.

XXIII. We never thought it a duty to ſeparate from every Church, that culpably neglecteth Diſcipline, and hath open wicked men therein: If we be not guilty of it, and cannot lawfully live in the Communion of a more obedient Reformed Church.

XXIV. We never judged needleſs affected ſingularity a duty, but judge it beſt in lawful things, for concord ſake, to Conform to the Cuſtom of the Churches where we live or come.

XXV. Though we think not that men may command us to deſtroy our Neighbours Souls by ſcandal, yet when diſobedience to a Rulers Law is like to do more hurt than the ſcandal taken at it comes to, we are for avoiding the greater hurt.

XXVI. We never ſeparated from any tolerable Pariſh Miniſters or Churches, as if they were no true Miniſters or Churches, nor perſwaded any ſo to do, nor to take the Communion of ſuch Churches for unlawful to us, either occaſionally or conſtantly, when we can have no better without more hurt than benefit to our ſelves and others.

XXVII. We hold it unlawful to reproach all Churches that we ſee to be faulty; but it is our duty to keep peace with all.

XXVIII. We hold mental diſtant Communion in Faith and Love, with many Churches, that by impoſing ſin, do deny us local Communion.

XXIX. Though I here tell you once for all, that I juſtifie not all that I can thus bear with, yet we can ſubmit by peaceable ſilence to many abuſes in a Church, which we dare not ſubſcribe to and improve, and uſe alſo Paſſive Obedience where Active is unlawful.

XXX. We are not againſt God-Fathers, and God-Mothers, as uſed of old; that is, when the Parents are the Covenanters for their Child, and their Death or Apoſtaſie is feared, for others to promiſe if they die or apoſtatize, to take care of the Child; or

for

for any Adopters or Owners to do it that take the Child as theirs.

XXXI. We are so far from being against true Confirmation, as it is the taking persons that own their Baptismal Covenant, solemnly into the number of adult Members and Communicants, that we desire it (and have written for it) as a chief means of the true Reformation of all our Churches in the Land.

XXXII. We differ not in Faith or meer Doctrine from the Church of *England*, as it's in the Thirty Nine Articles, but only in one new Article, put into the new Liturgy, of the *Salvation of Baptized Infants*, as *undoubtedly certain by the Word of God*, without any exception, if they then die.

XXXIII. We are not against reading the profitable part of the *Apocrypha*, as other Humane Writings may be read, sufficiently distinguished from the Word of God.

XXXIV. We are for Corporal Worship, as a due expression of Spiritual: And we are against all undecent expressions in Praying or Preaching, and all undecent Habits, Gestures or Actions.

XXXV. We blame not the Liturgy for extending the words of Charity and Hope as far as there is any reasonable ground, in Sacraments, Absolution and Burial.

XXXVI. We are not for mens invading the Ministry, unordained, but believe that Senior Pastors or Bishops are ordinarily the regular Judges of the fitness of Candidates for the Ministry.

XXXVII. We are not for unlimited Toleration: But that the Rulers justly distinguish in Law and License; 1. The approved, whom they must own and maintain. 2. The tolerable, whom they must tolerate. 3. The intolerable, whom they must restrain from doing hurt.

XXXVIII. We are for making true Religion as National and extensive as may be; and for a National Church; 1. As the associated Community of Churches in a Nation is so called. 2. And as they are all accidentally united under one Christian Soveraign: Though we abhor the casting out all that be not of our opinion and measure, and that cannot submit to all that I here enumerate, which I and others of my mind can submit to.

XXXIX. We are so far from desiring to draw people from the Parish-Churches into Conventicles, that we would keep up the honour of them to the utmost of our power, as knowing how greatly the countenance and maintenance of Rulers conduceth to

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the furtherance of Religion; and that the publick Religion will be the common and National Religion; and moſt will be there: And if the Proteſtant Religion were reduced to Tolerated Conventicles, Popery would poſſeſs its place, and become National, and ſoon withdraw even private Toleration, as we ſee in *France*.

XL. We are not for Preaching when we are forbidden, where there is not a real and evident need of our Labours.

XLI. We believe not that the *Scots* Covenant, or any other doth oblige us to Sedition, Rebellion, Schiſm, or any ſin; nor doth diſoblige us from any Obedience due to any Superior.

XLII. We refuſe not the *Oxford* Oath, or any ſuch, becauſe it is an obligation to obey our Rulers in Lawful things, nor becauſe it reſtraineth us from reſiſting Authority; for we give as much to Humane Soveraignty, and confeſs as much obedience due to them from Subjects, 1. As any Text of Scripture ſpeaks: 2. Or any General Council, ſave what they give to the Pope and his Vaſſals. 3. Or as any Confeſſions that we know of, of any Chriſtian Churches agree in. 4. Or which Lawyers, Politicians, and Hiſtorians, Proteſtants, Papiſts or Heathens agree in, as far as we are acquainted.

XLIII. We are not againſt the uſe of Synods or Councils, nor againſt Princes uſing their advice for ſuch Laws *circa ſacra* as belong to them to make: We believe Councils ſhould be uſed as far as the common good and Communion of the Catholick Church requireth it; though no Forreigners have Juriſdiction over us. And we hold, that if they agree of any thing conducible to the common good, though their agreement be not a *Law*, but a *Contract*, yet the general command of keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, obligeth all to hold ſuch concord for the ends ſake, that have no ſpecial reaſon againſt it.

In theſe Forty three things we oppoſe not Conformity.

L. *And if yet after all this Agreement, we muſt be deſtroyed by Diviſions, the heavy Curſe of God is on us, and will ſurely fall on them that are the cauſes of it, who ever they be.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV. *A brief enumeration of the things imposed on us which is the matter of our Nonconformity.*

M. DO you know what it is that we are required to conform to?

L. *I know it is to use the Liturgies, Ceremonies, and submit to the Bishops, as your Governours: I know no more.*

M. And yet dare you become our Judge? If you are no more exact and just in Matters of Law, your Clients must pay for it. Before I come to handle the particulars, I will set together here the things required of us; and how much of them we refuse, I will tell you when I try them, and give you our Reasons against them.

I. Whereas few of the Nonconforming Ministers were at Age, and Ordained till Dioceſans were put down in *England*, and were Ordained by an Assembly of Senior Pastors, which were then in possession of the Power, and had many years the Approbation of the whole National Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*, before they were admitted to any Incumbency; none of these may now exercise their Ministry unless they be Re-ordained by Dioceſans.

II. No man can be Ordained by them, and admitted to any Cure, that will not take the *Oath of Canonical Obedience* (as they call it) and in his Ordination Covenant to obey his Ordinary.

III. No man must Preach the Gospel by the authority of his Ordination and Office, till moreover he have got a Licence from the Bishop to Preach: and till he have got that Licence to Preach, he may not take upon him to Expound in his own Cure, OR ELSEWHERE ANY SCRIPTURE, OR MATTER, OR DOCTRINE, but shall only study to read plainly and aptly without glossing or adding, the Homilies already set forth, or hereafter to be published by lawful Authority. *Can.* 49.

IV. No man may be Ordained, or be a Licensed Preacher, or Catechize, who doth not subscribe these words, *Ex animo*, "*That* the *Book* of Common-Prayer, and of Ordaining of Bi-"shops, Priests and Deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary "to the Word of God, and that it may lawfully be used, and "that he himself will use the Form in the said Books prescribed "in publick Prayer and administration of the Sacraments, and "no other.

V. No man is to be Ordained a Minister, nor have any place or Benefice or Cure, that doth not openly and publickly before the Congregation declare his unfeigned Assent and Consent to the use of all things in the said Book contained and prescribed in these words and no other. "[I *A.B.* Do here declare my unfeigned Assent "and Consent to all and every thing contained and prescribed "in, and by the Book entitled, The Book of Common-Prayer, "and Ordaining.] And every Lecturer also; the first Lecture and every Month must publickly and openly declare his Assent to, and Approbation of the said Book, and to the use of all the Prayers, Rites and Ceremonies, Forms and Orders therein contained and prescribed.

VI. By this all must Assent and Consent to this Article of Faith or Doctrine. [*It is certain by the Word of God that Children which are Baptized, dying before they commit actual Sin, are undoubtedly saved.*] Not excepting any, though the Children of Atheists, Infidels or Sadduces.

VII. We must Assent and Consent, that at publick Baptism, persons called Godfathers and Godmothers, who take not the Child for their own, do in the name of the Child Covenant with God, without the Parents, who are forbidden to be Godfathers or Godmothers, or to speak one word, nor must be urged to be present, nor may the Godfathers, *&c.* speak one word but what is written in the book. And they are there not only to promise for the future, but to profess in the Name of the Child at present [I renounce them all] (the Devil, World and Flesh) and [*All this I stedfastly believe*] and (to be baptized) [*This is my desire*] and for obedience [*I will.*] And these Godfathers also engage as their parts and Duty, to see that [*this Infant be taught so soon as he shall be able to learn what a solemn Vow, Promise and Profession he there made by them:* And that *they call on him to hear Sermons, and chiefly that they provide that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar Tongue, and all other things that a Christian ought to know and believe to his Soul's health, and that the Child may be vertuously brought up to lead a godly, and Christian life.*] All this these three persons must promise as before God and the Church, but the Parent is not only excused from any such promise, but forbid it by the Canon.

VIII. We

VIII. We must Assent and Consent to refuse to baptize the Child of any godly Christian, who bringeth not his Child to be baptized with such undertaking Godfathers; either because he can get none that will seriously promise him to do what they must Vow to do, and so dare not draw them into sacrilegious perfidiousness, or because he thinks it his own part to enter his Child into God's Covenant, and thus to promise for its Education.

IX. We must Assent and Consent to sign the Infant with the transient Image of the Cross. [*In token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his Banner, against Sin, the World, the Devil, and to continue Christs faithful Souldier and Servant to his lives end.*] Which the Canon farther expounds thus, [*To dedicate them by that Badge to his Service, whose benefits bestowed on them in Baptism the name of the Cross doth represent*] [*an honourable Badge whereby the Infant is dedicated to the Service of him who died on the Cross.*]

X. We must Assent and Consent to Baptize none publickly without this Sign, but to deny Christendom to all that dare not receive it, and their Children.

XI. We must Assent and Consent to reject all that dare not receive it Kneeling from the Sacramental Communion of the Church.

XII. We must Assent and Consent to a false Rule to find out *Easter-day* for ever, in these words; [*Easter-day (on which the rest depends) is always the first Sunday after the first full Moon, which happens next after the one and twentieth day of* March.] The common Almanacks tell you it is often false.

XIII. We must Assent and Consent to use words at the Burial of all, except the *Unbaptized, Excommunicate and Self-murtherers*, which plainly pronounce them saved, *viz.* [*Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take to himself the Soul of our dear Brother here departed.*] And [*We give thee thanks, for that it hath pleased thee to deliver this our Brother out of the miseries of this sinful world*] and [*that we may rest in him, as our hope is this our Brother doth.*]

XIV. We must Assent and Consent to read publick Lessons out of *Judith*, *Bell* and the *Dragon*, *Tobit*, and other Apocryphal books, from *Sept.* 28. till *Nov.* 24. every day, except some proper Lessons interposed.

XV. We must Assent and Consent to all the mis-translations of the Psalms, *&c.* and not only use them (which we refuse not) but subscribe that none of them are contrary to the word of God.

XVI. We must Assent and Consent to admit none to the holy Communion till [*such time as he be Confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be Confirmed*] that is, by Bishops in the English method.

XVII. We must Assent and Consent that [*such ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof, at all times of their ministration shall be retained in use, as were in this Church of* England *by that authority of Parliament in the Second year of* Edward VI.

XVIII. We must Assent and Consent to give an *account within fourteen* days of every one that we keep from the Sacrament, to the Ordinary. And that the *Ordinary proceed against the offending person according to the Canons.*

XIX. We must publish all such Excommunications and Absolutions, as are according to the Canons decreed by Lay Chancellors.

XX. This binds us to consent and publish the Excommunication of all that *affirm that the Liturgy containeth any thing in it that is repugnant to the Scriptures.*] And the Oath of canonical Obedience binds us to such publication, if it be commanded us.

XXI. And we are both these ways bound to publish all Excommunicate, *ipso facto*, (if commanded) who *affirm any of the Rites and Ceremonies such as may not be approved and used lawfully.*

XXII. And all that say any of the Thirty Nine *Articles* in any part may not be subscribed, though it be but about Traditions or Ceremonies.

XXIII. And we must, if required, publish all, *ipso facto*, Excommunicate who say the Church Government by Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, and the rest that bear Office, is against God's Word.

XXIV. We must, if commanded, publish all Excommunicate who affirm that the *Form and Manner of Making and Consecrating Bishops, Priests or Deacons containeth any thing in it that is repugnant to the Word of God.* (Though it assert that the Bishops and Priests are distinct Orders, which even in K. *Alfrick's* days the Church of *England* denied.)

XXV. We must publish them Excommunicate who affirm that the Nonconformists may truly take the name of another Church, *&c.*

and

and that any assemblies of Subjects not allowed by Law, are true and Lawful Churches.

XXVI. No Minister must wittingly administer the Sacrament to any but such as Kneel, nor to any of the foresaid depravers of the Liturgy, Ceremonies, Orders of the Church, *&c. Can.* 27.

XXVII. None of other Parishes are often to be admitted to Communion.

XXVIII. All Ministers that repent of Conforming must be suspended, excommunicate and deposed at last, *Can.* 38.

XXIX. We must give the Sacrament to none that go for it from unpreaching Ministers, but must send them home, *Can.* 57. Nor must Baptize their Children.

XXX. Ministers must not be suffered that wear not the Surplice, *Can.* 58.

XXXI. No Minister must refuse or delay to Christen any Child that's brought to the Church to him on Sundays or Holydays to be Christened, without exception of Atheists or Infidels Children. *Can.* 68.

XXXII. No Minister may keep any Fast in publick or at private Houses, or be present at any (on what necessity soever) without the Bishops License for it under Hand and Seal, or the Laws appointment.

XXXIII. We must if commanded publish all Excommunicate that affirm that the Sacred Synod is not the true Church of *England* by representation; or that deprave it as a faction, *&c.*

XXXIV. No man was to be ordained or suffered in the Ministry for twenty years that did not subscribe thus. [*I do declare that I do hold that there lies no obligation on me, or on any other person from the Oath commonly called the* Solemn League and Covenant *to endeavour any change or alteration of Government in Church or State.*]

XXXV. All Nonconformists must swear that they will never endeavour any alteration of the Church Government, or else be banished five miles from Corporations and all places where ever they preached since the Act of Oblivion.

XXXVI. All Ministers must subscribe and Nonconformists swear that they abhor the Traiterous position of taking Arms by the Kings Authority against those that are Commissioned by him.

XXXVII. We must assent and consent to the damnatory sentence in the Creed called *Athanasius*'s.

XXXVIII. Every Minister consenteth to say the Morning and Evening Service every day in the year, not being lett by sickness or other urgent cause.

XXXIX. Ministers must concur to force the unwilling Parishioners to the Sacrament, or else to Excommunicate and ruine them.

XL. If we dare not Conform for fear of sin we must forsake our Ministry to which we are Ordained and Vowed, and give over Preaching the Gospel what ever need there be, and must also remove our dwelling from all places aforesaid.

These are the parts of Ministers Conformity.

Lay-Mens Conformity is as followeth;

I. They must trust their Souls with the Pastoral oversight of those, and only those as their fixed Pastors, whom Patrons will choose for them, and Bishops institute: Though the Conformists accuse many Patrons of such hainous sins, as speaketh them unfit for so strange a trust, besides those that are Papists, and Bishops say they have not power to keep out the unfit.

II. They are not only hereby deprived of the exercise of Self-Government for the saving of their own Souls, but of due Family-Government for the safety of Wife and Children, and Servants, and must not bid them choose better Pastors.

III. They are forced to forbear Communion with all Nonconformists, and to separate from all others besides Conformists, though they account this Schismatical separation.

IV. When God commandeth them, [*If thy Brother trespass against thee tell him his fault between thee and him; if he hear not tell the Church*, &c. *And with Drunkards, Railers, Fornicators*, &c. *not to eat.*] They are forced to have Communion with Parishes where no such Discipline is exercised, nor can they perform any such duty, and to lose all the benefit of this Christian Order and Discipline, none being so much cast out as Conscionable Dissenters.

V. Conscionable care to obey Gods Law is greatly discouraged and made a dangerous thing, while it must be mens utter ruine to deny Conformity, even in a Ceremony, to men, when it's done for fear of sinning against God.

VI. They are to be deprived of Baptism and *Christendom* for their Children, if they dare not use the foresaid way of God-Fathers, as described.

VII. They

VII. They are also to be unchristened if thinking our Crossing is used as an unlawful Humane Sacrament, they dare not receive it as a dedicating Badge of Christianity.

VIII. If they think Kneeling at receiving the Sacrament an unlawful hardening the Papists, they are denyed Communion.

IX. If any dissent but from Confirmation, Organs, Kneeling at the Rails, taking a Reader or unfit man for their Pastor, they must not be received to Communion by a Conformist in another Parish.

X. All the Land is engaged (Ministers, Vestries, Corporations and Militia) by Oaths or Covenant never to endeavour any alteration of Government in the Church.

XI. They are all engaged to abhor the position as trayterous, of taking Arms by the Kings Authority against any Commissioned by him in pursuit of such Commission.

XII. All Corporation, Government and Trust is confined to them that declare that there is no Obligation on them or any other from the solemn Covenant or Vow, not excepting so much as to oppose Schisme, Popery or Prophaneness, to defend the King, or repent of sin, though these be Vowed.

I have now told you what Conformity is, in Ministers and People.

CHAP. V. I. *Of Re Ordination.*

L. *You have named a great number: But I doubt whether all these are imposed, and in many of them I see no harm.*

M. I told you that if *any one of them* (imposed) be sinful Nonconformity is a duty, which all the Ministers in *England* were bound to.

L. *What sin can you find in Re-Ordination?*

M. I must first state the Controversie before I argue it.

1. The Word [*Ordination*] may signifie either the first Dedication and Ordination to the Ministerial Office as such, by which a man is separated from the Laity to Gods Ministry: Or else, a *Mission* on some particular Ministerial work, as *Paul* and *Barnabas* were sent abroad, *Acts* 11: Or a Minister may be sent to *America*, *&c.* Or else a fixed appointment to some one particular Church or Flock, which is done here by Presentation, Institution

tion and Induction. It is neither of the two last that we speak against. They may be often done: But it's only the first.

2. The word [*Ordination*] may signifie; 1. That Moral action by which a man is made a Minister of Christ, which is, his solemn Contract with Christ, expreſt by his Consent, and by the Ordainers inveſting action: This is it which we mean in the Controverſie, which may not be done twice. 2. Or it may signifie the meer words of the Ordainers and Ordained, which make up the said Moral action. We deny not but the same words repeated may make up one Moral Ordination: If the Bishop by tautology repeat them twice or thrice: Or if they should to satisfie men of divers Languages that are present, be first spoken in *English*, and after in *French*, or when some that doubted require it, should go over them again; all this is but one Ordination.

L. *How prove you that our Bishops intend any more, when they say, it is only to satisfie the Law, that you may be capable in* England.

M. 1. That it is not a meer *relation to some particular cure* that they mean, is undeniable: 1. Because they call that by the name of Institution and Induction, and not of Ordination. 2. Because they never ordain any over and over upon removals. 3. Because the words of Ordination in the Book tell it us.

2. That they do it not as a *Repetition* of the same valid Ordination is past doubt. 1. Because the same repeated by the same men will not serve. 2. It is to be done, again ten or twenty years after the first. 3. He is to be fined in an hundred pound that administreth the Sacrament without it. 4. He is taken for no true Minister without it, which cannot be true of a bare repetition of words: No reasonable men would lay so much on that.

3. It is undeniable that they take men for *unordained*, and no Ministers till they ordain them: 1. Because they all disown *re-ordaining*; they know that the Canons called the Apostles, and the whole antient and later Church condemn it as like Anabaptistry; and no one Bishop in *England* will not renounce it: Therefore it's certain that they take the first Ordination for null. 2. And they have so declared their judgment in many words and writings, and in the Act of Uniformity, it is plainly intimated in the penalty.

L. *And what harm is there in being twice Ordained?*

M. 1. *Ad hominem* I need not dispute it: All the Bishops disclaim

claim it as unlawful, ſo that we have their confeſſion.

2. It is the ſame fault as Anabaptiſtry. If they be blameleſs why make you ſuch a noiſe againſt the Anabaptiſts? To be twice made a Chriſtian, and twice made a Miniſter is of the like kind.

3. It is ſomething cauſeleſly to caſt our ſelves under the Cenſure of all the Church that hath been againſt it, and to be condemned by them.

4. It is a plain prophanation of God's holy name, and of a great and holy Ordinance, by Lying and taking God's name in vain. For they are ſaid to be *now admitted to the Office*, and *this day to receive it*, and God is told that they *are now called to it*. And all their Examinations and Anſwers imply that they were no Miniſters before, and the Biſhop ſaith, [*Receive the Holy Ghoſt, for the Office and work of a Prieſt now committed to thee by the Impoſition of our hands.*] which all imply it not done before. And in ſo ſacred a contract with God, to lie to him, and prophanely abuſe his name, and the holy Ghoſts, and the Duty of Prayer and Praiſe, is tremendous. Be not deceived, God is not mocked.

5. It is a confederacy with Corrupters and Uſurpers, that arrogate and appropriate valid Ordination to themſelves, and a confirming all their injury to poſterity, that all that ſhall hereafter imitate them may be encouraged, by alledging our *Re-ordination*.

6. It is a hainous injury to all the other Reformed Churches as if we degraded their Miniſters and ſeparated from them all as no Churches. For one part of them have no Dioceſans, and the reſt have Biſhops, that at the Reformation were Ordained by Presbyters.

7. It is contrary to one of the Articles of our Religion, 23. *Theſe we ought to judge them lawfully called and ſent, which be choſen and called to this work, by men, who have publick authority given to them in the Congregation to call and ſend Miniſters*, &c. But in other Countries, Presbyters have publick authority given them. And Art. 36. *The book of Conſecration doth contain all things neceſſary to ſuch conſecration and Ordaining.* But it hath nothing for *Re-ordaining* thoſe before Ordained.

8. It is a plain condemnation of the Church of *England*, which hath profeſſed Communion with the Reformed abroad, as with true Miniſters and Churches of Chriſt. And we are now told that to communicate with Schiſmaticks induceth the guilt of Schiſm.

9. It introduceth Anabaptiſtry, or utter confuſion into the Nation, leaving men in doubt whether for fourteen years the people had any true Baptiſm (while it's a controverſie whether Laymens Baptizing be valid, and Mr. *Dodwell* maketh all men to be out of any Covenant-title to Salvation that have not the Sacraments from a Miniſter that hath ſucceſſive Epiſcopal Ordination.) And all Chriſtians muſt queſtion whether they have not ſo long here lived out of the Church of Chriſt, without Miniſtry and Communion.

Do you think that none of theſe nine Reaſons prove Reordination ſinful?

L. *But becauſe the Biſhops deny it, let me hear your proof that the former Ordination here by Presbyters is not a nullity.*

M. I. *Ad hominem*, the Church of *England* hath, as I ſaid, judged the like valid in the Reformed Churches, by holding Communion with them. I cited a great number of Biſhops and Doctors in my *Chriſtian Concord.*

L. *But they ſay that* neceſſity differeth their caſe from ours here; *And even Doctor* Sherlock *tells you that if God make neceſſity; neceſſity will make Miniſters: But ours Schiſmatically pull'd down the Biſhops, and now diſown the very Order.*

M. There is a ſatisfactory conceſſion in theſe words, but the accuſations are made up of falſehood and deceit.

1. Archbiſhop *Uſher* and others that thought the Ejectors of Epiſcopacy were guilty of Schiſm, yet maintained that their Ordination was valid: He told me how he pleaded it to the King.

2. Do they think that *Salmaſius*, *Blundel* and all others that have written more againſt our Prelacy than the Engliſh, were deprived of it againſt their wills by neceſſity?

3. What neceſſity can they pretend to the *Hollanders*, *Helvetians*, *Geneva*, *Embden*, *Bremen*, the *Palatinate*, and *Scotland* heretofore? might they not have had Prelates when they would.

4. Was

4. Was not the neceſſity far more notorious to thoſe that I now plead for. They lived in a Land where Epiſcopacy was caſt out, and kept out by a potent Army. I think there were but four or five Biſhops alive when it was reſtored.

5. It is falſe that they caſt out the Biſhops. Thoſe Miniſters that joyned with the Parliament to caſt them out, were Ordained by Biſhops, and therefore are none of the men that we are ſpeaking of: Theſe that were Ordained by Presbyters were then young men at School, or in the Univerſities. And what are other mens actions to them?

L. *But they are of the ſame mind and party.*

M. Are you a Lawyer, and do you accuſe men in the *Temple* without naming them, and bringing proof of their guilt? *Noxa caput ſequitur*, ſhould all the Clergy be called guilty if *Sibthorp*, or *Manwaring*, or *Heylin* were proved ſo? what error you accuſe them of, prove, and puniſh them for no other.

6. But I prove that the Biſhops themſelves made other Ordination neceſſary. Becauſe they would Ordain none without ſinful ſubſcriptions and conditions, which muſt not be yielded to: If you can prove the terms lawful on which they Ordain, I ſhall try your skill anon.

II. I farther prove the Ordination in queſtion valid, thus; *Where there is a true notification of God's will that this perſon ſhall be a Miniſter of the Goſpel, there is no want of validity in his Ordination; But thoſe here ordained by Presbyters might have ſuch a true notification of God's will* — Ergo, The Major is plain; Becauſe *God's will* and *Man's conſent* are the *fundamentum* of the Relation; therefore nothing can be wanting to it's being and validity.

The Minor is proved: Thoſe men that have laudable ability, and willingneſs, and the conſent of a people in true neceſſity, and the approbation of a National Aſſembly of Learned Divines (of which many Biſhops were called to be members) and the inveſting Ordination of the graveſt Senior Paſtors, that were then to be had, had a true notification of God's will that they ſhould be his Miniſters. But ſuch were theſe in queſtion. *Ergo.*

III. *The way of ordination, which was valid in the Primitive Church is now valid — But such is that in question.* Ergo.

As to the Minor; The Ordination of such Pastors as were but the Rectors of single Congregations, was it that was valid in the Primitive Church. But such is that in question.

Doctor *Hammond* labours to prove that in Scripture time there were no other Bishops or Presbyters but the single Pastors of single Assemblies: Mr. *Clerkson* hath fully proved, and I more fully in my Treatise of Episcopacy, that for a hundred and fifty years, if not much more, there were no particular Churches bigger than our Parishes. A Bishop then was but the chief Parish, or Congregational Pastor, who guided it with his Assistance. And such are all our Incumbents (especially in great Towns) who have Chapels and Curates and Lecturers to assist them. And *Grotius de Imper. sum. Pot.* sheweth that really the chief Pastor of a Church is a Bishop, whatever they call him. But I have so largely proved in my Treatise of Episcopacy, pag. 231, 232, &c. that our questioned Ordainers were scripture Bishops, and that those now called Presbyters Ordained long after, that I must not repeat the same things here again.

IV. *Those that are in Orders may confer Orders: Ordinis est Ordinare*, as *Usher* was wont to say; As Physicians make Physicians, and Philosophers make Philosophers, and Generation propagateth the Species: And our Church consenteth to this. 1. In that Presbyters must concur in Ordination by Imposition of hands, which is an act of authority and collation. 2. In that the Convocation hath a *greater power*, even Canon making; and that Convocation consisteth half and more of Presbyters, and the Canons Excommunicateth all that deny it to be the representative Church of *England.*

But *Presbyters have the power of Order* (as Bishop *Carlton de Jurisdict.* proveth it commonly acknowledged) *equal with Bishops.* pag. 7. And the Church of *England* in King *Ælfrick's* time (*ad Wolf.* in *Spelman*, pag. 576. l. 17.) *Affirm* that Bishops and Presbyters are but one Order.

V. *Those may ordain validly whose Ordination is more warrantable than that of Roman Bishops* (for our Bishops own theirs

as

as valid and ordain them not again when they turn Proteſtants:) *But the Presbyters that Ordained here fourteen years, did it more warrantably than the Roman Biſhops.* Ergo.

1. The Papiſts Ordain men to a *falſe Office*; to be Maſs-Prieſts: But the ſaid Paſtors ordained none but to the ſame office that Chriſt inſtituted.

2. The Papiſts have their power of Ordination from the *Pope*, whoſe own power and office in *Specie* is a falſe Uſurpation: But it is not ſo here, where the ordaining Paſtors were lawfully called.

3. Papiſts Ordination enters them into a *falſe Church in Specie*, a pretended catholick Church headed by the Pope;) but our Paſtors entered them into no Church but Chriſts.

4. Papiſts make them take ſinful *Oaths* and *Conditions* before they Ordain them. But theſe Paſtors (at leaſt that impoſed not the Covenant) did not.

If yet any will nullifie the Reformed Churches and Miniſtry, and their Ordination, and not the Papiſts, we may underſtand what their Mind and Communion is.

VI. That *Ordination is valid which is leſs culpable, than many Dioceſans*: But *ſuch is that in queſtion. Ergo.*

To the proof of the Minor (which only needs proofs here)

1. Some Dioceſans here have been Papiſts (as *Godfrey Goodman* of *Glouceſter*) and divers have pleaded for and owned a *Forreign Juriſdiction*, which the Oath of Supremacy abjureth.

2. I have fully proved in the ſaid Treatiſe of Epiſcopacy that the Office of Paſtors of ſingle Churches is more warrantable than our Dioceſans who are the ſole Biſhops of many ſcore or hundred Biſhops Churches.

3. The ſaid Presbyters (at leaſt who medled not with the Covenant) impoſed *no unlawful condition* on the Ordained, as too many have done.

4. Many Biſhops plead the derivation of their power from *Rome*: And what theirs is I ſhewed before.

But becauſe I muſt not write a Treatiſe on this one queſtion, you may read it done copiouſly and unanſwerably by *Voetius* againſt *Comel. Janſenius de deſperata Cauſa Papatus.*

Yet I add one difference more. The Ordainers and Ordained

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in queſtion, had the conſent of the Flocks and neighbour Miniſters; but the ſaid Biſhops come in by the Magiſtrate without the conſent or knowledge of the Flocks, and ſo do the Miniſters uſually whom they Ordain. And what the ancient Church thought of this, abundance of Canons ſhew. I'le now cite but one, *Concil. Nic. 2. Can. 3. Omnem Electionem quæ fit à Magiſtratibus, Epiſcopi, Presbyteri vel Diaconi irritam manere ex canone dicente, ſiquis Epiſcopus ſecularibus Magiſtratibus uſus, per eos Eccleſiam obtinuerit, deponatur & ſegregetur, & omnes qui cum eo Communicant. Oportet enim cum qui eſt promovendus ad Epiſcopatum ab Epiſcopis eligi, quemadmodum a ſanctis patribus Nicænis decretum eſt in Can. qui dicit [Epiſcopum oportet maximè quidem ab omnibus qui ſunt in provincia conſtitui.* And many Councils nullifie their Epiſcopacy that come not in by the election or conſent of *Clergy and People*, which *ad hominem* is ſomewhat to them that urge ſuch Councils againſt us.

L. *I confeſs your reaſons ſeem unanſwerable, at leaſt as to the caſe of neceſſity, which I am convinced was the caſe of thoſe that were ordained when there were no Biſhops to whom they could have acceſs, or no place in the Miniſtry without Presbyters Ordination, and who then durſt not be twice Ordained: And for Churchmen that muſt be ſtrictly Religious to ſuffer on ſuch terms I cannot ſpeak againſt. But we ſecular men think theſe too little things to ſuffer for.*

M. If your conſciences can call ſuch prophanation of Gods Name, ſuch condemnation of *Proteſtant* Churches, ſuch ſtrengthening the hands of——a little thing, they ſhall be no meaſure for our conſciences: For we believe that we muſt die, and that there is a God and a righteous final Judgment.

CHAP. VI. II *Of the Covenant and Oath of Canonical Obedience to our Ordinary or Biſhop.*

L. *WHat harm is there in your promiſing or ſwearing obedience to your Ordinary, in things Lawful and Honeſt? What a man ſhould do, he ſhould not refuſe to ſwear or promiſe.*

M. I will firſt tell you the words impoſed, and then I will ſtate the Controverſie, and then I will tell you our Reaſons.

The

The Words at Ordination are these. 1. On Deacons and Priests. [*Will you reverently obey your Ordinary and other chief Ministers to whom is committed the Charge and Government over you; following with a glad Mind and Will their godly Admonitions, and submitting your selves to their godly Judgments?* Answ. *I will so do, the Lord being my help.*

The form of the Oath which they use to impose is this.

Ego A. B. *Juro quod præstabo Veram & Canonicam Obedientiam Episcopo Londinensi ejusq; successoribus in omnibus licitis & honestis.* (And little know we of what Religion their Successors will be, or who will have the choosing of them: I'le not swear to I know not who.)

The Bishops themselves also must take this Oath of due Obedience to the Arch-Bishop. *In the Name of God* Amen: *I* N. *chosen Bishop of the Church and See of* N. *do profess and promise all due reverence and obedience to the Arch-Bishop and to the Metropolitan Church of* N. *and to their Successors. So help me God through Jesus Christ.*

L. *What is your Controversie against any of this?*

M. 1. We do not question the duty of *obeying the King* and all his Officers, governing as Magistrates by the power of the Swords which the King may commit to them. If Bishops or Lay Chancellors be made *Magistrates*, we will obey them as such: And therefore when they summon us, we appear and answer, because the King authorizeth them. And many Nonconformists have defended the taking the Promise, as supposing that the Word [*Ordinary*] signifieth only the Judge of a Court set up by the King as Supream Governor by the Sword in matters and over persons Ecclesiastical as well as Civil, according to the true sence of the Oath of Supremacy.

2. We do not refuse to promise and swear due Obedience to such as are our Lawful Pastors, ruling the Church by the power of the Keys according to the Word of God: Though we think that requiring such Oaths is an irregularity in them, against the ancient Canons, and a far higher presumption than the Independents Covenant.

3. We do not deny a patient and quiet submission to unlawful-

lawful persons and acts of Government, not owning their sin our selves, and doing no evil at their command.

But these are the things which we are not satisfied in.

I. *Obedience* hath essential Relation to the *Laws and Mandates* of those that we obey: And the *Canons* of *England* are the *Laws* by which they openly profess to Rule the Church: And therefore they call it the *Oath of Canonical Obedience*, that is, of obeying the Church Government according to the *Canons*; And when we know the *Canons* before-hand, we know what Government and Obedience is meant. And we swear fraudulently if we take not the Oath in the sence of the *Imposers*: And they commonly tell us, that this is the meaning of [*Due Obedience*,] and if *Godly Admonitions*, or [*in licitis & honestis*] be put in, that doth but suppose that Obedience according to the *Canons* is *Godly* and *licitum & honestum*, and not that we are left to choose which Canons we will obey. All Bishops I doubt not will stand to this Exposition of the sence.

Now there are abundance of things in the Canons which we think to be greater sins than we think meet to call them.

II. We know that the Rule of the Bishops is by *Chancellors Courts* and other such, where Lay-men exercise the Church Keys, by Decretive Excommunications and Absolutions: which wise men think to be sacrilegious Usurpation, and a Prophanation of a dreadful part of Christs Government: And Lawyers and Civilians tell us, that the word [*Ordinary*] signifieth the appointed *Ordinary* Judge of the *Court*, and so that we swear or Covenant to obey *Lay-Civilians using the Keys*. And [*other chief Ministers*] can mean no less than all the Archdeacons, Officials, Commissaries, Surrogates, *&c.* whom we covenant to obey; not in civil things or the *circa Sacra* belonging to Magistrates, which we refuse not, but in the exercise of the *Church Keys*.

III. They that think they have fully proved that Diocesans Ruling many hundred Churches without any Bishops under them, are an Office *in Specie* contrary to Gods Word, and the practice of the Primitive Church, and that it corrupteth or excludeth true Church Discipline, do think it a sin to conform

form by an Oath of Allegiance or Obedience to them, though they live peaceably under them.

IV. They that think that by Scripture, and Reason, and Universal Church Customs and Canons, they are no Bishops or Pastors that come in by Magistrates without the Election or consent of the Flocks and Clergy, think that to swear Obedience to them is to be guilty of their Usurpation.

These four be the things refused in this Oath and Covenant of Obedience.

L. *And what have you against obeying according to the Canon?*

M. I. You may gather it from the foregoing enumeration of the Canonical Impositions: Many things of a heinouser nature than Liturgies, Ceremonies or things Indifferent.

1. We dare not obey an Order for Excommunication according to the 4th Canon, against any man that affirmeth that the Book of Common-Prayer containeth any thing in it that is repugnant to the Scriptures. Judge that by the proof that I shall anon give.

2. The same I say of the Excommunication in *Can.* 5, 6, 7, 8. and many others, which are after to be particularly mentioned.

3. And there are many things in the Canons which we dare not *practise*, and therefore dare not swear Canonical Obedience.

L. *That Oath doth not oblige you to approve of all that is in the Canons, no more than a Justices Oath to execute the Laws doth bind him to approve of, or execute every Law.*

M. We would not be guilty of an over rigorous Exposition: But had it been in the days of Queen *Mary*, when the Six Articles, and other Laws for Murdering Innocents were on foot, and were actually expounded by Execution, I would not have been one of the Justices that should have sworn to execute them. Though a Justice be not bound to approve every Law, he is bound in the main to execute them in his place; And if he know that the Imposers of his Oath did mean, that he should in a special manner execute *e. g.* the Laws against Protestants, he should not take that Oath contrary to their sence. Our Canons make these things forementioned their principal part, as you may see by putting

them first with that strange penalty of Excommunication *ipso facto*. And indeed it is no small part of the whole Book that we dissent from.

II. But moreover we dare not promise or swear Obedience to our Ordinaries, till we know that Lay-men governing by the Keys are not those Ordinaries. I have consulted Lawyers, and some say that only the Bishop is meant by our [*Ordinary*;]But I think they are but few that say so. And indeed we are bound to believe the contrary, because terms of Art or Science are to be understood according to the use of the men of that Art or Science. But men of that profession commonly call other Judges of their Courts our *Ordinaries*, besides the Bishops: So doth *R. Cousins* in his Tables, and others.

2. And *other Governing Ministers* whom we must obey, are mentioned in the Ordination Covenant also besides our Ordinaries.

Our Reasons against this are these.

1. It is unlawful to confederate with Sacrilegious Prophaners of a great Ordinance of God, in stablishing and practising that Sacrilegious Prophanation.

But to Covenant or Swear Obedience to Lay-men in usurping the power of the Keys of Decretive Excommunication and Absolution, we fear is such; and as to the Minor the reason of our fear is, if it be Sacrilegious prophanation for a Lay-man to usurp the other parts of the Pastoral Office, then it is so for him to usurp the power of the Keys. But the Antecedent is confest, as to the Sacraments and the charge of ordinary Teaching and Guidance of the Flocks, *&c.*

2. *Ad hominem.* If the Bishops take it for Usurpation in Presbyters to exercise this power, supposing it proper to themselves, they must judge it much more so in Lay-men.

L. *The Lay-men do it by the Bishops Authority and in his Name; and so he doth it by them: His Name is to the Excommunications.*

M. 1. The Chancellors have their Commissions from the King, which the Bishops cannot alter.

2. If it be so it is the worse.

1. That the Bishops name should be abused to a Sentence, when he never heard or tryed the Cause. If this be against the Bishops Will, it is a forgery; if he *consent*, it seems he trusteth

truſteth his Conſcience in the Chancellors hands, and Excommunicateth all at a venture that the Chancellor Excommunicateth, though he know not whom nor why, which is againſt the Light of Nature, and the common Juſtice of the World.

2. And it is contrary to the nature of the Paſtoral Office to execute it by men of another Calling: Either it is proper to Biſhops or not; if not, Presbyters or Lay-men may uſe it; if yea, then none may be deputed to uſe it, that are not Biſhops. If the Keys and not the Sacraments may be uſed by Lay-men, then the uſe of the Keys is not proper to Paſtors, but only Sacraments. But no man can give a juſt reaſon why Lay-men may not give the Sacraments as well as uſe the Keys.

Yea indeed the Sacramental adminiſtration cannot be proper to the Paſtoral Office if the Keys be not: For the uſe of the Keys is to Judge who ſhall be admitted to Sacramental communion: and if only *Delivering* and not *Judging to whom*, be proper to the Paſtor, then he is but a carrier or cryer and Executioner of Lay-mens Judgment, perhaps lower than the Deacon. Barely to ſay over the words and do the action, is but an outward Miniſtration, and no act of Power at all.

L. *But it is not the Chancellor but the Surrogate that Excommunicateth.*

M. 1. Ask thoſe that have been much among them, how oft they have heard a Lay-Civilian ſay at once, [*I admoniſh you, I admoniſh you, I admoniſh you, I excommunicate you.*]

2. Hypocriſie is but an aggravation of Sin: The Lay-man decreeth the Excommunication, which is the judicial act; when they uſe a Surrogate Prieſt, it is but as a hireling Servant to pronounce the Decree, to mock the Church with a Formality.

3. If indeed it be the Prieſt that Excommunicateth and Abſolveth, when no Biſhop is there, then they confeſs that the power of the Keys is not proper to a Biſhop, but may be validly uſed by a Prieſt.

L. *But what have you againſt ſwearing Obedience to the Biſhops themſelves, ſuppoſing the Canons were materially Lawful.*

M. III. We have nothing againſt a peaceable ſubmiſſion to them, if they were proved all Uſurpers. For my part, when I

think how the high Priests were made (out of a wrong line, by *Roman* power and purchase, *&c.*) in Christs time, and how much he was for submission to them, and a use of all that was good and lawful, done by those bad unlawful intruders, it resolveth me to regard *bare Possession*, so far as our own edification and the common peace requireth But as Christ was a Nonconformist to the Pharisees vain Traditions, so he was so far from *swearing Obedience* to these Usurpers, that he oft plainly and vehemently reproveth them. Many, for the *bonum publicum*, which is *Suprema Lex* and *finis regiminis*, did live in quiet submission to the Usurpers of *civil power* here, who yet would never have *sworn* obedience to them or justified their Usurpation.

That the frame of Dioceſans as the only Bishops is unlawful *tota specie*, I have so largely proved in my Treatise of Episcopacy, that I must not here repeat it, as long as the Diocesan party by not answering it seem to grant it. I have proved,

1. That this Diocesan *Species* destroyeth the old *Species* of particular Churches, turning the Parishes into *no Churches*, but parts of a Diocesan Church while they make a Bishop essential to a Church.

2. That they set up a false *Species* instead of it, *viz.* A Church *infimæ speciei*, which hath many score Parishes, if not many hundred in it, without any *under Bishop* to them.

3. That it depoſeth the *old species* of *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, both, which were [to every Church of the lowest species] a Bishop with his Presbyters *ejusdem ordinis* (if they could be had) so that many score or hundred Bishops are put down, on pretence of setting up Episcopacy.

4. And they set up both Bishop and Presbyters of a humane unlawful sort instead of those depoſed, *viz.* Arch-bishop *infimi ordinis*, over a thousand or hundred Carcasses of Churches: and half Presbyters that have not the power of the Keys, nor are of the same Order with the Bishops.

5. That they *depoſed* Christs true *Church Discipline*, and made it as *impoſſible* as for one School-master alone to govern all the Schools in a Dioceſs, or one Physician many hundred Hospitals, or one Mayor many Hundred Corporations without any School-master (but an Usher or Monitor) or any Physician, or any Mayor or Justice under him.

6. That

6. That they have ſet up a falſe humane Diſcipline (before deſcribed) inſtead of Chriſt's, which they have taken down. And all this we dare not juſtifie by a confederacy by Oath.

IV. And we think that the fourth thing which we ſtick at needs no other reaſon; ſuppoſe the ſpecies of Dioceſans were of Gods appointment, and only the numerical Biſhops Uſurpers, we can ſubmit and live peaceably, but we cannot ſwear obedience to them. They plead more than we for the power of ancient Councils, and Canons. I have elſewhere fully proved (as *Paul* of *Venice* hath done, and Mr. *Clarkſon*, and Dr. *Burnet*, and many others) that many great Councils nullified the Epiſcopacy of all that came in without the election, or conſent of the Clergy and Flocks: And we our ſelves cannot conceive how any man can be the Paſtor of thoſe that conſent not; though we can eaſily conceive that Diſſenters may oft be *obliged to conſent* when they do not; ſo may a Son or Daughter be obliged to obey their Parents in conſenting to Marry, ſuch as Parents chooſe for them, when yet it is no marriage till that conſent. How few in a Dioceſs ever know of the Biſhops Election till it's paſt, and how few conſent, I need not tell. We can ſubmit to theſe, but not *ſwear Allegiance* to them.

V. And in all the foreſaid caſes, we have another diſſwaſive.

1. It is ſo much of the King's Prerogative that all Subjects muſt ſwear Allegiance and Fidelity to him; that in almoſt all Nations it hath been thought dangerous, to make the Subjects alſo ſwear obedience to every Juſtice or inferior Officer, leſt it ſhould make them too like Kings. 2. Leſt the Subjects ſhould be entangled between their Oath to the King, and their Oaths to all theſe Officers, in caſe of the Officers contradiction to the King's. 3. Leſt ſo many Oaths ſhould make that Government a ſnare to the conſcientious, which ſhould be for their eaſe and ſafety. 4. Leſt ſo much ſwearing make Oaths contemptible, and bring in perjury, and endanger the King, who ſhould by our Oaths be ſecured.

2. And I have elſewhere named many Councils, and Canons, which prohibite Biſhops this practice of making the Clergy ſwear fidelity to them, and have condemned it, as of dange-

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rous consequence. And they that are for *Councils* should not engage us causelesly *against them.*

3. The present Impositions greatly stop us, till we better know what it is that we must do. We have cause to make a stand, when we are all sworn [*never to endeavour any alteration of the Government of the State*] which we readily obey, and yet seem to be called to do that which we are told by some is an alteration of it: That is, the making of our present species of Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, yea Chancellors, Officials, Commissaries, *&c.* as unchangeable a part of the Government as Monarchy it self is, and so disabling the King to make any alteration in them.

For set all this together and consider, 1. All the Clergy is bound or sworn to obey both Bishops and every Ordinary. 2. The Canon, *ipso facto*, Excommunicates every man that affirmeth that the Church Government under his Majesty by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons and THE REST THAT BEAR OFFICE in the same, is repugnant to the word of God; so that all the Lords and Gentlemen in *England* that have affirmed that the Government by the Keys as used by Dioceſans over hundreds of Churches, or by Archdeacons, Lay-Chancellors, *&c.* is repugnant to God's word, being already *ipso facto* Excommunicate, how far they are capable of being Parliament-men I know not: but I suppose if in *Parliament* they shall affirm any such repugnancy they are Excommunicate; and without the Act of King and Parliament no alteration can be made. 3. And now to fix them all, the Kingdom is sworn never to endeavour any *alteration in the Church Government:* viz In the *Corporation Act*, the *Militia Act*, the *Vestry Act*, the *Oxford swearing Act*, after the *Act of Uniformity.* And is not every Chancellor, or Archdeacon, or Bishop now made as immutable necessary a part of the Kingdom as the King.

L. *You speak ignorantly for want of acquaintance with the Law: Do you think King and Parliament oblige themselves? It is only particular subjects out of Parliament that they oblige.*

M. I. But when the Parliament is dissolved, are they not all particular subjects save the King? And are they not all then hereby bound? And do you think that it was the meaning of the

Act

Act that they who swear never to endeavour alteration, may yet endeavour it, if they be chosen Parliament men? I will manifestly disprove it. All these Oaths do joyn the Government of *Church and State* together: Yea, and put the *Church-Government first*, as if it had the Pre-eminence. But it was never the meaning of the Oath, that the Parliament may endeavour to alter *Monarchy*, which is the *State-Government*: *Ergo*, it meant not that they may endeavour to alter *Prelacy* or *Church-Government*.

II. But suppose it be as you say, They that know the present thing called the *Church of England* know that their Writers openly maintain that the Obligation of the Canons depends not on the Parliament, save only as to the *forceable execution* of them, but on the authority of the *Church* as a Society empowered by Christ: And therefore that King or Parliaments at least may be Excommunicated by them as well as others. All are Excommunicate men that do but call their Government sinful.

CHAP. VII. II. *Of the restraint of Ordained Ministers from Preaching, and expounding any Scripture, or Matter or Doctrine*, Can 49.

L. *WHat is it that you have against Conformity in this?*

M. I. That men are at once made Christ's Ministers, and forbid to exercise that which they are Ordained to.

II. That we are laid under the hainous guilt of breaking our Vow, when they have engaged us to make it; and of betraying mens Souls, by omitting a vowed duty.

III. That we are forbidden that which is the duty of every Lay-Christian that is able, as if they would suppress Religion and Charity it self.

L. *But you do not swear or subscribe to this Canon.*

M. 1. But we are bound by them to obey this Canon; for it is the Law of the whole Church of *England*.

2. I have shewed you that swearing obedience to them must mean, obeying their Laws which are far more of weight than particular mandates.

L. *But*

L. *But as long as you may have Licenſes, how doth this put you on any ſin of omiſſion or commiſſion?*

M. Both their words and their deeds tell us that they Ordain more than they Licence to Preach or Expound any Doctrine. And is it no ſinful omiſſion think you for all the reſt to forbear all this?

2. And many were Ordained heretofore, who by the new Act of Uniformity, are denied Licenſes without new Profeſſions and Covenants, and terms which they undertake to prove ſinful.

3. And our Miniſtry is by this made arbitrary to the Biſhops will. He may bind us to the Office, and when he hath done keep us from it.

L. *If they deny you Licenſes they bind you not to preach.*

M. Ordination is a Vow and Dedication to the ſacred Office; Mark the Covenant which they impoſe on us [Q. *Are you determined out of the Scriptures to inſtruct the people committed to your Charge?* &c. Anſw. *I have ſo determined by God's Grace.* Q. *Will you give your faithful diligence always ſo to miniſter the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Diſcipline of Chriſt as the Lord hath commanded,* &c. *that you may teach the people committed to your Care and Charge, with all diligence to keep and obſerve the ſame?* Anſw. *I will ſo do by the help of the Lord.* Q. *Will you be ready with all faithful diligence to baniſh and drive away all erroneous and ſtrange doctrines contrary to God's word, and to uſe both publick and private monitions and exhortations, as well to the ſick as to the whole within your Cure, as need ſhall require, and occaſion ſhall be given?* Anſw. *I will, the Lord being my helper.*]

Is it not treachery to draw men into all theſe Vows, and then to command them never to *Preach nor Expound any Doctrine* or *matter any where?* Doth it not come near to an Atheiſtical prohibition of Religion? may they not tell their people the meaning of *Baptiſm*, or the *Creed*, or *Lord's-Prayer*, or *Commandments?* May they not teach their own Children and Servants theſe? If a *Prieſt* may not do it, much leſs the Laity and Vulgar.

L. *The meaning is not, againſt expounding to their children or Wives at home, but in the Church?*

M. Can the Church of *England* tell ſuch a meaning no plainer than by ſaying [*either in his own Cure or elſewhere?*] Is not

not his Houſe, or his Neighbours Houſe *elſewhere*: If they can ſpeak no plainer, I would they would make us no Laws till God Licence them.

2. But ſuppoſe that [*elſewhere*] ſpeak only of Churches, you know that other Canons forbid them Preaching in private houſes.

3. And what a Prieſt is that who muſt be forbidden to teach the People in the Church: or there to tell Children the meaning of the Catechiſm? How like is this to the *Moſcovy* State?

L. *You know that many men are unable to Preach, Expound or ſpeak ſenſe about Divinity, if they ſhould attempt it.*

M. And are ſuch fit to be made the Teachers and Guides of the Flock? Shall the ſame men make the man Phyſician to an Hoſpital, and when they have done, forbid him to do any more than read to them a Phyſick book of their making? Is not an ability to teach men, at leaſt the *Eſſentials* of Chriſtianity, Eſſential to a Miniſter? Do they not then make *No-Miniſters*, and call them *Prieſts*, if they ordain men that cannot Teach the Eſſentials.

L. *Reading the Scripture and Homilies is Teaching.*

M. It is ſo: but if that only will qualifie one for the Prieſthood, one may be a Prieſt that knows no more than an Infidel or Atheiſt: and if Reading will qualifie men for a Benefice, many will ſtudy for no more: and the People will value them accordingly.

L. *But you know that when the Land came out of Popery, we muſt have meer Readers in moſt places, or worſe.*

M. And you know that theſe Canons were made in King *James*'s days long after that, and that they are now continued as the Church Laws: Did our laſt Convocation alter them? It is ſuch excellent men as the world is not worthy of (*Ames*, *Bayn*, *Parker*, *Hilderſham*, *Dod*, &c.) that have been forbidden to Preach, whilſt thoſe that could not Preach were Ordained and Inducted. It is only the preſent things that I am ſpeaking of.

2. And though men of mean abilities, if tolerable, may be tolerated, yet men that want *Eſſential* qualifications ſhould

not be made Miniſters; but if bare Reading be neceſſary, they may Read as Lay-men.

I conclude therefore, that as making ſuch Prieſts and Canons is a ſin in them, ſo to obey them by omiſſion of Miniſterial Teaching, for want of a Licence from the Biſhops, would be ſinful Conformity in any true Miniſter of Chriſt, if he live where his Miniſterial work is neceſſary. And to forbear all Expounding any matter, or Doctrine, ſave by Reading our Homilies, is ſacriledge and perfidiouſneſs, and uncharitable inhumanity.

CHAP. VIII. IV, and V. *Of ſubſcribing and declaring Aſſent and Conſent.*

L. *WHat is your next Exception to Conformity?*

M. Subſcribing according to the Canon, that *there is nothing in the Book of Common-Prayer contrary to the Word of God*, and that *we will uſe no other Form.* 2. And *publickly declaring our Aſſent and Conſent to all things contained and preſcribed in and by it, and our Approbation of all the Forms, Orders*, &c. *as aforeſaid.*

L. *What have you againſt this Approbation of the Liturgy?*

M. Negatively, 1. We blame nothing in it that is good: And I take it for a good Book, in the main, but not faultleſs. As you ſaid of the Canon of allowing Readers, ſo ſay I of the Liturgy; it was better immediately after Popery, than it is now; that is, it was more congruous, and was a great Reformation, and we honour the Book and their Memory that made it.

2. We do not think that there is any ſuch faultineſs in it, as maketh it unlawful to joyn in the publick Worſhip, and ordinary Communion, with the Church where it is uſed: We honour them as true Churches of Chriſt.

3. I do not think it unlawful to read the ordinary Lords day Service, when the publick good requireth it, and we can have no better without greater hurt than benefit: Our Objections being moſt againſt the By-offices, eſpecially of Baptizing and Burial.

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But, 1. We think it unlawful to Covenant to *use no other Forms* in publick Prayer. II. And unlawful to *subscribe and declare that it is faultless.*

I. For the first we have these Reasons, 1. The Bishops themselves, by the Kings Order, do upon special occasions of Fasts and Thanksgivings, prescribe, impose and use other Forms; and we must not covenant to disobey them. 2. The publick Ministers have, and do in the Pulpits before Sermon, use other Forms; And so break this Covenant themselves.

3. It belongs to the Office of a Pastor, as well to word his own Prayers, as his own Sermons: And it is sinful to renounce so much of the work of the Office which we are vowed and ordained to.

L. *These Instances are a clear Exposition of the Canon, and shew that by* [no other Form] *they intended not to exclude other Pulpit-prayers, or other Forms, prescribed by the Bishops.*

M. 1. If the whole Church of *England* here also can speak no more intelligibly, than by [*no other Forms*] to mean only [*till the Bishop prescribe it, and except your own daily Form in the Pulpit*] I would they would leave us to Gods own Laws, and not take on them to be necessary interpreters of its great difficulties. If such men forbear that *expounding*, which they *forbid others* till they will do it better, the loss will be the less; Scripture speaketh plainlier than this.

2. But *who* giveth this Exposition? To expound the Law by a common obligatory Exposition, is proper to the Law-makers: He that maketh the words, maketh not a Law, if he make not the sense. Judges make not the sense, but decide particular Cases by it as they understand it. The Canons are made by the *Convocation*, which he that denieth to be the Representative Church of *England*, is Excommunicate. The Pulpit-Preachers, nor the particular Bishops are not the *Convocation*, and therefore have not power to expound their Canons, by any common obligatory Exposition; much less contrary to the expres words. Which way most of the Clergy went under Bishop *Parker*, *Grindal*, and *Abbot*, is well known: And yet now they are so far from being taken for the Expositors of the Churches sense, that they are openly scorned, as popular fautorers of Puritans, and those of their mind called *Grindalizers*,

II. But it is the second, that is the *Trojan* horse whose name is Legion, I mean, that hath many more evils in the belly of it, *viz.* that we must profess that the three Books, Articles, Liturgy and Ordination are so utterly faultless, that there is *nothing in them contrary to the Word of God, and that we Assent and Consent to all contained and prescribed* in and by them.

L. *What have you against this? what is there in it that is contrary to God's Word?*

M. God's Word is perfect, and forbids the least faulty errour or defect. If we had never seen the Book, we know that men made it, and that every one that made it had ignorance, errour and sin, and can a *perfect faultless* Volume be made by such *faulty men? Operari sequitur esse.* They renounce all pretensions to Infallibility in the Articles of Religion.

L. *You interpret the words rigorously: By* [nothing contrary] *they mean,* nothing *so* contrary, *as* that one may not use the Books.

M. If by [*nothing*] they mean not [*nothing*] and if by [*contrary*] they mean not [*contrary*] we will better know what they mean before we subscribe, else you may make it lawful to subscribe to any thing in the world, and say that the Imposers *mean better than they speak.*

L. *And* Assent and Consent *is expresly confined to the use.*

M. 1. I shall prove that that is not true. 2. That if it were true, it no whit amends the matter, nor maketh it lawful to us.

I. It is not true: For, 1. The words of the Declaration are as expresly *universal* as man can speak: And the foregoing words [*to the use*] do speak but *de fine*, and the words of the Declaration *de mediis*: And all Lawyers agree, that when the *title of* a Law expresseth the *End*, that limiteth not the sense of the words of the Law, because the *Means* may be larger than the *End*. As the *Oxford* Act of Confinement is in the title to *keep Nonconformists* from Corporations; And yet Lawyers resolve that it extendeth also to *Conformists*, if one of them should but once preach in a Conventicle. The Parliament and Prelates thought that the way to secure the *Use*, was to oblige them to *Assent and Consent to all in the Book contained and prescribed*: 1. Therefore they tie all to declare in that *same form of words*,

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and to add *no other*, lest they should make any exposition that limits them. 2. And the word *Assent* signifieth an act of the understanding, which must have Truth for its object. 3. And it is after exprest by the word [*Approbation*] whereas a man may use that which he doth not *approve* of.

2. Oaths, Covenants and Professions must be taken in the most usual proper sense, unless another be exprest to be the Imposers meaning; which is not here done, and the words are most universal and without exception.

3. And to put all out of doubt, the Parliament expounded themselves. 1. At the making of the Act, this was debated, and reasons given against the limited expressions, which prevailed. 2. Since then a new Act against Conventicles being made, it was moved in the Lords House, that seeing Nonconformists were thus far forbidden private Worship, they should be so far invited to Conformity, as that a Proviso might be added to this Act, that the Declaration in the Act of Uniformity should be understood to oblige men but to the *Use* of the things required: and the Commons rejecting that *Proviso*, it came to a debate or conference between the two Houses, where the Commons gave their Reasons against that Sense and *Proviso*: In which the Lords acquiesc't. Tnough I was not present, the Parliament-men that were, reported this, and I never met with man that contradicted it, or questioned the truth of it.

II. But if it were otherwise, it were to us never the better. For, 1. It were an ignorant reproach of the Church of *England*, to say that they have put any thing in their Liturgy which is of *no use*. This will include every syllable. They themselves tell you in their Prefaces, what use the very Calendar, and every other part are of. The use of the Articles of Faith and Doctrines is our *understanding* assent and belief of them in order to Love and Practice. The use of the Orders in the Rubrick is to oblige us to obedient practice, and so of all the rest. And to *Assent, Approve and Consent to every thing contained and prescribed* practically, even to the use of them, is more than a bare speculative Assent.

L. *Wherein lieth the sin of such a Declaration?*

M. 1. In general it is incredible, as I said before, in consideration,

ſideration of the matter, and the Authors together: The Book of Articles, Liturgy and Ordination, are a big Volume, and contain great variety of matter, and that high and myſterious; The Authors were every one of them men of imperfection, that had ignorance, errour and ſin: And operation exceedeth not power. Who dare ſay that any Sermon, or Prayer, that ever he maketh, hath nothing in it but what he may aſſent and conſent to? Much leſs ſo great a Book.

2. The Articles which muſt be ſubſcribed as faultleſs, ſay *Art.* 15. [*Chriſt alone is without ſin—But all we the reſt (though baptized, and born again in Chriſt) yet offend in many things, and if we ſay that we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us.*] And *Art.* 21. [*General Councils. For as much as they be an Aſſembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God, they may err, and ſometimes have erred, even in things pertaining to God.*] And are our Convocation more infallible than General Councils? The Church muſt be exemplary in humility; and is it humility to ſay, We Biſhops and Prieſts, having written three Books; he ſhall not preach Chriſt's Goſpel, that will not declare that there is not a word in them that is faulty, or repugnant to God's Word, and will not aſſent and conſent to all therein.

3. The Papiſts hereby ſcandalized, do ſcorn us, and ſay, The queſtion is not now of an Infallibility, or a Judge that all muſt aſſent to. It is but *who* this *Infallible Judge is?* whether it be the Pope and a General Council, or the *Engliſh* Convocation, which is liker to be of greater Authority and Infallibility; we require no greater aſſent and conſent of you to the Canons of the Univerſal Church, than the State and Church of *England* require to their Books.

4. This ſeemeth to us to ſet the Articles, Liturgy and Ordination-book above the Bible. 1. God himſelf hath not made the aſſent and conſent to every thing contained and preſcribed in the Bible neceſſary to Salvation, or to the Miniſtry. 1. There are divers Books in our Bibles, whoſe Divine Authority many have queſtioned, who yet were not for that degraded. The Apocryphal books are yet controverted by men tolerated on both ſides. There are hundreds of various Readings, where no one is neceſſitated to determine for this or that.

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Translations are all faulty, being the work of faulty men: And no wise men will declare that this, or that, or any Translation hath nothing in it contrary to the Original Word of God. And are our Bishops Books more faultless?

5. It is a sin to Confederate with, and Encourage such audacious Lording it over the Faith and Souls of men, and such ill Examples.

L. *Your Instances shew that you expound them too strictly: Can you imagine them so insolent and impious as to impose their own Books more strictly than the Bible, and require more Assent and Consent?*

M. Call it what you will: I must suppose that matter of Fact which is undeniably evident to our senses: It's an ill argument [This is unreasonable, and ungodly, or inhumane. *Ergo*, It was not done] What is so false, absurd or impious, that man may not do?

L. *Some say, They are Articles of Peace only, and not of Faith.*

M. Some Brains will be cheated with a meer noise of words, as Birds with a whistle: We deny not but *Peace* is one of the ends of the Impositions: But the question is, What are the *Means*? Or whether they will take it for Conformity to promise. [*I will live peaceably*] or [*I Assent that I should live in Peace.*] Are you not bound in order to peace, to *Assent and Consent to all things in the Books?* Say, [*I Assent that some things are true and good, and some things false and bad, which yet for Peace I will use*] and try how it will be taken?

L. *Well: What is there in these Books contrary to Gods Word, or which you may not Assent and Consent to?*

M. The number is greater than we would have them. I will come to the chief of them, which I before named to you.

L. *I forgat to tell you, that it is not all* contained, *that is Assented to, but all that is* both contained and prescribed.

M. 1. A meer quibble to cheat Conscience: Ask the Bishop *Morley*, and Bishop *Gunning* yet living, whether this was the sense, and I will take their answer.

2. Then [*Assent* and *Contained*] had been put in in vain, and to deceive, [if *Consent* and *Prescribed*] signifie as much without them.

3. The word [*Approbation*] in this Act, and [*nothing contrary to Gods Word*] in the Canon, confute this quibble.

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4. I told you, were it so, it's never the better. All in the Book is prescribed to some use. They are out-side men that think *Use* reacheth but the body: Are Articles of Faith Assertions of no use?

CHAP. IX. Point VI. *Of the Article of Baptized Infants Salvation.*

M. THE sixth Point of our Non-conformity is a new Article of Faith in these words, in a Rubrick which we must Profess Assent and Consent to [*It is certain by the Word of God, that Children which are baptized, and dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.*]

L. *And what have you against Assenting to this?*

M. 1. That it is a *New Article* of Faith. 2. That it is arrogant and divisive, making a grand Controversie one Article of Faith. 3. It is certainly false in most, if not every one that declareth such assent. 4. It is a dangerous adding to the Word of God.

L. *Why call you a Rubrick an* Article of Faith?

M. It is most expresly made such: What is an Article of Faith, but that which *must be Assented to as certain* by the *Word of God?* Will you deny the Name, where there is this Definition?

L. *But how do you prove it to be new?*

M. Because it was never made for us before; you have the affirmative: If you say it was ever before, prove it. It's not in the Bible, it's not in our 39 Articles, nor Creed.

L. *Are not the old words of the former Book to the same sense?*

M. Not at all: If they were, why did the New Convocation alter them? The old words plainly signifie no more than this, that *Infants baptized have all ex parte ministri*, and may be saved without Confirmation, Exorcism, Chrysm, Spittle, Salt, Milk and Honey, and such other additions, supposing him *ex parte sui*, under the promise of Salvation, that is, to be the seed of the Faithful: Though I verily believe that after the making of the Common-Prayer-book, or Canon-Makers in *Bancroft's* days began to warp towards a worser sense. But our Defenders of the Liturgy expound it, as I say; and

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the tenor of the words may tell the Reader that they meant no more.

L. *Tell me first where it is that your Controversie lyeth.*

M. I. Negatively, 1. It is not whether the Infant Seed of one believing Parent should be Baptized: This is agreed on.

2. It is not whether those may be dedicated to God as our Children and baptized, who are Adopted, or any way made *our own Children*, as *Abrahams* bought and born to him in his house as his propriety were. Though we cannot say *we are certain of this*, yet we will not contradict them that say they are.

3. It is not whether Hypocrites Children have not so far a right to Baptism *Coram Ecclesia* as that the Minister ought to baptize them if it be justly demanded.

4. It is not whether there be a certainty of the Salvation of all the baptized Infants of true faithful Christians, that die before actual sin: Though all good Christians are not certain of this: yet with the Synod of *Dort* we hold that Christians have no just cause to doubt of it.

5. It is not whether they may not be good men that think all baptized ones absolutely in a state of Salvation. None of these are the Controversie.

II. But it is, 1. Whether all Infants without exception that be baptized, are saved if they then die.

2. Whether this be certain by the Word of God.

3. Whether all that be not undoubtedly certain of it, should be no Ministers?

L. *But it is not said* [All Infants,] *but* [Infants] *indefinitely.*

M. 1. There is no place of doubting of their universal sence. For an *Indefinite* term *in re necessaria* is *equal to an Universal.* And they except the unbaptized from Christian Burial.

2. It is *Baptized Infants as such* that they speak of, and that under no other Character, nor with the least exception. And *à quatenus ad omnes valet argumentum.*

3. The Canon commandeth Ministers to baptize *all Infants without exception that are brought to them on any Sundays or Holydays* to be *baptized* after the Manner of the Church of *England.*

4. I have ſpoken with the Biſhops that brought in and promoted this Article, and they own the *univerſal* ſence, ſuppoſing the true form of Baptiſm; and ſay, that as any *man hath right to take up an expoſed Infant in the ſtreets and take it in*, ſo *hath any one to bring the Child of a Heathen, Infidel, Atheiſt or Sadducee to baptiſm.*

5 If they had meant it only of *ſome* baptized Infants and not all, they knew the Non conformiſts were of the ſame mind; and then they would have told us, what ſort they mean.

L. I. *And why may not an Article of Faith be newly declared? we have not read the Fathers? It may not be unknown to them: And I have heard that they are for it.*

M. The moſt ancient Churches were ſo much employed in baptizing the adult Converted from Infidelity, that we read little or nothing expreſly and particularly what they did about Infants in Baptiſm: They baptized none at age without a ſerious Profeſſion of true Faith and Repentance, and holy Dedication to Chriſt: They uſed to keep theſe as Learning Catechumens long before they baptized them, ſave in caſe of neceſſity near death. Therefore they had their ſet-times of the year for baptizing (two or three times) as our Biſhops have now for ordaining. And after all this ſtrict preparation, they pronounced the baptized in a ſtate of Salvation, but it was only on ſuppoſition that he was a ſincere, penitent, covenanting Believer. Even *Hildebrand* (Pope *Greg.* 7.) in his time concludeth that baptiſm ſaveth none that diſſemble or have not the Faith and Repentance which they profeſs: which the Papiſts do ordinarily confeſs, and Proteſtants much more.

And as for Infants, the Antients compelled not Chriſtians themſelves to baptize them, but left them to their own choice. *Tertullian* is for long delay till they underſtand, ſaying, *Cur feſtinat innocens ætas? Greg. Nazianzene* would have them ſtay at leaſt three years: In danger of Death they alway haſtened: *Auguſtine* and many others that had Chriſtian Parents were not baptized till at Age. And they took Chriſtians Infants, as *Paul* did, to be not unclean, but holy, and would receive others brought by ſuch as adopted or owned them as

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Pro-parents. But it was never the judgment of the ancient Churches that all Heathens or Infidels Children have right to Baptiſm and Salvation if any will but offer them to Baptiſm. Much leſs that it is certain by Gods Word that all ſuch are ſaved.

2. Articles of Faith are all contained in the Scripture, and that is not new; therefore nothing that is new can be an Article of Faith; nor can it be ſaid to be newly declared which was there from its beginning.

L. II. *And why call you it arrogant and dividing?*

M. Becauſe it preſumptuouſly condemneth the Reformed Churches and the Chriſtian World, determining that to be ſo certain by Gods Word, that none ſhould doubt of it that will be a Miniſter, when the Chriſtian World is of many ſeveral opinions about it.

L. *What be thoſe Opinons about it?*

M. 1. Some hold that the Covenant being the ſame pardoning, ſaving Covenant that is made to the faithful and their Seed, and their Children expreſly called *Holy*, they are all in a ſtate of pardon and ſalvation before baptiſm, and baptiſm doth but celebrate and inveſt them in it before the Church; and ſolemnly ſeal their Covenant right. And that this ſaving right is given only to the ſeed of the ſincerely faithful, or at moſt to thoſe that have ſuch Pro-parents, though the Seed of Hypocrites muſt be received by the Church, that know not mens hearts. And this I take to be the Truth.

2. Some others hold that this right to Salvation belongeth to them that have Grandfathers and Grand-mothers or remote Anceſtors that were truly Godly Chriſtians.

3. Some hold that it belongeth to all the Seed of profeſſed Chriſtians how bad ſoever the Parents be.

4. Some hold that it belongeth only to the Children of true Believers that are baptized, but not to the unbaptized.

5. Some hold that it belongeth to Hypocrites Children that are baptized, but not to the unbaptized.

6. Some hold that it belongeth to all baptized ones if they have God-fathers that profeſs Chriſtianity.

7. Some hold that it belongeth to all baptized by a true believing Miniſter, for the Faith of the Church.

8. Some hold that it belongeth to none that by Baptism are taken into any Congregation guilty of Heresie or Schism.

9. Some hold that it belongeth to all that are baptized by a Minister who is ordained by Bishops that have uninterrupted Canonical Succession, and not to others.

10. Some hold that the Baptism of a Lay-man or a Woman may be effectual to the Salvation of such.

11. Some Conformists hold that all Infants in the World are saved, baptized and unbaptized.

12. The most of the Papists hold that the baptized are saved, both from the pain of *Sense* and of *Loss*, but the unbaptized are saved from the pain of sense only, but not of loss; and so have neither Joy nor Sorrow.

13. Many wise Men hold that Salvation is certain according to the first Opinion to the Seed of Sincere Believers, but that we have no certain notice at all, what God will do with all the rest (baptized or unbaptized.)

14. Many think that God hath a certain number of Infants Elect whom he will save, and will cast away the rest, but that no man can know who they be; though the Faithful may have some uncertain hopes for their Children more than others, but no Promise.

15. Some think that the Common state of Infants in the Life to come is utterly unrevealed and unknown to us.

I do not say that none of these opinions should be disclaimed: But among all which Learned, godly men of all Countries hold, to say he that is not *certain* of *some one of* them as God's word is unmeet to be a Minister, is dividing arrogance, of men that overvalue themselves.

L. III. *How then can you make good your charge of falsehood? May it not be true among many false ones?*

M. I make it good two ways; men must say they are *certain* that are not *certain*. 1. No man can be certain that God's word saith that which it doth not say: But God's word doth not say directly, or by consequence that all baptized dying

dying Infants are undoubtedly saved. He that saith there is such a word, let him produce it.

It is suspicious that these same men that subscribe, that nothing is necessary to Salvation, but what is contained in the Scripture, or may be proved by it, would impose this belief on us, and never tell us so much as by a Marginal citation of any one text of Scripture where it may be found. All that ever by talk I could hear of them is, *Gal.* 3. 26, 27. *Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* As if they would have us believe, 1. That all Atheists and Infidels children have *faith in Christ Jesus* if they be but baptized. 2. Or that all the *Galatians* that *Paul* wrote to were in a state of certain Salvation, when it is apparent that he spake to the adult, whom elsewhere he saith he feareth lest he have bestowed on them labour in vain, and as bewitched men, they had disobeyed the truth, *&c.* 3. Or that all that put on Christ Sacramentally by Profession and Baptism were in a state of certain salvation, even *Simon Magus*. How commonly when they confute the Separatists, that alledge the titles of *Saints, holy children of God, &c.* given to all the Churches by the Apostles, do they themselves expound it of a sanctity of *Profession* and *Relation* as distinct from a saving state of Grace, as to many of the visible members of the Church. And must we now believe that the *visible* and the *invisible* membership are of equal extent. If this prove that all the baptized adult have put on Christ savingly, and have right to Heaven, it will confute the universal Church that hath ever believed the contrary, and it will be good news to all worldly hypocrites: But St. *Peter* saith, *It is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good Conscience to God.* And he told *Simon Magus* that he had no part in that matter, not for apostacy, but because his heart was not right in the sight of God. And sure it is no streight gate by which men enter into a state of Salvation, if all the hypocrite flagitious sinners are in it, that will but be baptized.

But if this Text say not that all adult hypocrites baptized, so dying are saved, much less doth it say it of all the children

children of them, and of all Infidels that are baptized. Is this to give us proof of *undoubted certainty*?

They alledge also, *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, what then? *Ergo*, all Infants that are baptized, that neither believe, nor are the seed of believers shall be saved. This is a new Gospel, and no proof that the authors of it say true.

Another is, *Joh.* 3. 3, 5. *Except a man be born again of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Doth this prove that all are born again of the Spirit that are baptized? Is this proving by God's word.

L. *What is your other proof, that it's a false profession of them that declare Assent to this Doctrine.*

M. 2. It is this: He that saith a thing is *undoubtedly certain* by *God's word* which *God's word contradicteth*, doth certainly speak falsely. But so doth he that maketh this profession.

That God's word *contradicteth* it, I have proved so fully in my two Disputations of original sin, and my Treatise of Infant Baptism, and *Methodus Theologiæ*, that I must not here repeat it, *viz.* by abundance of plain Texts that appropriate the Covenant-blessings to the Faithful and their Seed, and exclude or curse the seed of the wicked, at least as out of the Covenant of God: I will now repeat but one. 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. *Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* If the children of Infidels are not holy, but unclean, they have no right to the promise of Life, or to the Seal and Investiture by Baptism. But, *&c.* Ergo.

I know Dr. *Hammond* will have Holiness here to be nothing but [*the Church useth to baptize such on presumption that they will be educated to Christianity*:] and *uncleanness* to be but [*the Churches use to refuse such*, supposing they will *not be so educated.*] And so that the Seed of the Faithful have no special promise of pardon and life. But, 1. I have as aforecited and to Mr. *Tombs* proved many such promises to the Seed of the Faithful, which Divines should not unthankfully like Anabaptists deny.

2. And I ask such Doctors what baptism doth for the Infants at present and on what account? Doth it put them in

in a present right to Salvation? If not, why are they at present baptized, when God instituted no baptism but one, which is for signification and investiture in the *present remission of sins*: And so saith the Liturgy: And if so then on what account is an Infant saved? Is it meerly because another undertaketh to teach him hereafter? No man can undertake that he shall believe or live. If he could, that would but prove that he shall be pardoned when he believeth and not before. And if all Infants, whom any Christian will undertake hereafter to teach, though they never *live* to be taught, or will never *believe*, be by this put into a present right to Salvation, a stranger's undertaking of meer teaching upon utter uncertainty of life and success, is supposed to have such a promise which yet these Doctors deny to be made on the accounts of their own parents interest in Christ and them; and his dedicating them to Christ. And if these promising God-fathers be meer Lyers, the Child is supposed to be baptizable and saveable by it.

But if they say that the right to Salvation comes, *ex opere operato*, by meer baptizing, whether the Child have undertakers or not, I answer, that a prophanation of God's ordinance is not a saving act: God hath said no such thing, but that the Children of Infidels are *unclean* and *unholy*, and doth not say, except some body will baptize them. And why should not the Church baptize as many Infidels Children as they can catch up, though none undertake for them, if baptizing them do certainly save them if they so die?

I conclude therefore that seeing no man can be certain that all the baptized Children of Heathens, Infidels, Jews, Atheists or Diabolists are in a state of Salvation, God never promising it, but saying the contrary, whoever professeth this *undoubted certainty*, speaketh falsely, that which he hath not.

L. *But they say not* [I am undoubtedly certain of it] *but only that it is* undoubtedly certain *in it self.*

M. This is to jest with holy things? To be *certain* is to be a *Truth that hath ascertaining evidence*, if you mean objective certainty: and how can any man profess or affirm that who knoweth it not? He that affirmeth that it is *objectively certain*, doth therefore affirm that he knoweth it to be so, and is

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subjectively certain, if he mean that it is evident and certain to *others* and not to him, it's a contradiction: for if he know it not to be certain he cannot tell that another doth.

L. *But though you be not certain of it, the subscribers may.*

M. 1. I have proved that no man is certain of it, 2. Judge by all the rest of their wisdom, whether every Youth that comes for Ordination from the Universities, be so much wiser than we, that they are certain of this which we think uncertain or false. Judge by their other qualifications, whether the seven thousand Ministers that declared their assent to the Book before they ever saw it, are like to be certainer than the two thousand that were cast out; And are they certain of this that are uncertain of many great and weighty truths through ignorance?

3. Yea many Conformists and Papists, say that *Infant Baptism* cannot be proved by Scripture, but by Tradition. And can Ten thousand Ministers then be certain by *Scripture* that baptized Infants are saved? How gross a contradiction is this?

4. And judge farther of the credit and modesty of such men: some Divines say that Faith it self hath not evidence, and that he that doubteth of Christianity and the Life to come may be saved, if his belief of it be but strong enough to make him trust and prefer it before all this world. And I hear their greatest Divines say that few would be saved if none but they that are *undoubtedly certain* of the Life to come, and of the truth of the Gospel should be saved. And yet all must be cast or kept out of the Ministry that will not affirm that they are more certain of a *hard Controversie* if not of an *untruth*, than Christ requireth us to be of our very Christianity.

L. IV. *What is the fourth part of your reason against this point?*

M. 1. We dare not father that on God which he never spake. 2. And we dread the curse, *Rev.* 22. against them that shall add to his word, *viz.* that he will add his curses upon them. How terribly are false Prophets threatned that say, *Thus saith the Lord*, when the Lord never said it: This is to belie God and to take his name in vain. And for Nine thousand

thousand or Ten thousand Ministers to affirm that this is *certain by God's word that they are undoubtedly* saved, and when they have done cannot to this day, shew us one word of God that saith it, is such an adding to his word as we had rather still be called all that's naught, and imprisoned than be guilty of.

We take it for a Fanatick presumption in Papists to pretend to be infallible in Councils, in determining those things which out of the Council through ignorance they understood not: and how it should be but by Enthusiasm, or fanatick pretence of Inspiration, that a multitude of raw ignorant fellows, or lads should come to find that in God's word as undoubtedly certain, which none of us in forty or fifty years search could ever find there, I cannot tell.

L. *I know not what to say to this: I would they had left it to mens free thoughts.*

M. And do you think now that it's lawful for us deliberately to Assent and Consent that this is an *undoubted certainty* when we are not *certain*, nor believe it to be *true?* Should we lie to be conformable, were there but this one thing it obligeth us to Nonconformity whatever we suffer for it.

CHAP. X. Point VII. *Of the* English *sort of Godfathers at Baptism.*

L. *WHat have you against our use of Godfathers in Baptism?*

M. I. Negatively, we are not at all against the old sort of *Patrimi*, Susceptors, or Sponsors that were used at Baptism in the ancient Churches; though we think it but a prudential thing, and not of necessity to Baptism.

L. *What mean you by the ancient sort? what did they?*

M. At first, the adult were themselves Baptized: for their Children had no right till the Parent was a Christian. And for three hundred years Christians were under Heathen persecution; in which some forsook Christ for fear by apostasie, and others died while their Children were in Infancy, who were thereby exposed to desertion, or to Infidel Education. Wherefore to secure the Education of these Infants, the Susceptors that joyned with the Parents as their Seconds, 1. Did

teſtifie their opinions of the Parents, as ſerious Chriſtians, not like to apoſtatize. 2. And did promiſe that if the Parents either died or apoſtatized, they ſhould undertake the Childrens Education. But if the Parents were dead already, they undertook to Educate the Child themſelves as their own. But they were Sponſors for no Infidel's Child, unleſs they firſt adopted him, or took him for their own.

L. *And what doth our God-fathers differ from this, for which you take them to be ſinful, or not approvable?*

M. The difference is ſo great, and maketh ſo great a change in our Chriſtening, as I am loth to name to you. 1. With us godly Chriſtian Parents themſelves, are forbidden to be God-fathers with the reſt, and to ſpeak one word, much more to profeſs that they dedicate them in Covenant to Chriſt: Nor muſt the Miniſter urge the Parent to be preſent; leſt his conſent ſeem neceſſary.

2. The God-fathers and God-mothers are neither tied to bring the Children of Chriſtians only, nor only ſuch as they take for their own; but without difference may bring the Infants of any Atheiſts, Sadduces, Jews, Infidels, or open enemies of Chriſt and godlineſs, without taking them for their own.

3. They perſonate the Child in promiſing and profeſſing in his name, without authority ſo to do.

4. They do not only promiſe what the Child ſhall do hereafter, but they at preſent profeſs that the Child by them, or they perſonating it, do Believe, renounce ſin, and deſire Baptiſm: As if the Child were bound to do this by himſelf or by another.

5. God-fathers too commonly covenant for the future Education of the Child, themſelves to do it, or cauſe it to be done, which they neither ever purpoſed to perform, or ever made the Parents believe that they intended; and ſo make Chriſtening a perfidious vowing, or covenanting with God: Theſe are not things indifferent, I think.

L. 1. *How prove you that the Parents may not be prime Covenanters, or Sponſors for their own Children? Are not they obliged to get God-fathers and God-mothers for them? who are ſuppoſed to come by their procurement? And doth not that ſignifie their own conſent, to what theſe are to undertake?* *M.*

M. It signifieth only that the Law constraineth them to let their Children be baptized, to avoid their own punishment, and to get others to enter them into the Christian Covenant. But not that they either are Christians, or consent to that Covenant themselves, either for themselves, or Children. For,

1. Known Atheists, Infidels, and Sadduces, that deny Christianity, are bound by the Law to get God-fathers for their Childrens Baptism, as well as Christians; and such cannot be supposed to covenant for them with Christ themselves. The Sixty eight and Sixty nine Canons command Ministers to refuse no Child that is brought, nor to refuse or delay to baptize in private in case of danger, who ever desireth him to do it.

2. The Twenty ninnth Canon saith [*No Parent shall be urged to be present, nor be admitted to answer as God-father for his own Child: Nor any God-father or God-mother shall be suffered to make any other answer or speech than by the Book of Common-Prayer is prescribed in that behalf.*] The Parent may say what he will to God in secret. But at the Christening of his Child, if he should but say, [*I believe God's promise to the faithful* and their seed: *I do devote my Child to Christ, and engage him in his Covenant: or I promise to educate him to Christianity*] he breaketh the Canon, and goeth against the Churches Law. I did before the Bishops at the *Savoy*, 1661. put the case to them, thus without fiction: An Infidel of my Parish that useth openly to talk against the Scripture and Life to come, to avoid inconveniencies, resolveth to send his Child to be baptized; and I must not refuse it by the Law: Hath the Child right to Baptism, and is it undoubtedly saved? Dr. *Sanderson* in the Chair answered, *nemine contradicente*, that if he brought him with God-fathers according to the Church of *England*, I need not doubt it. But there were but two in the Parish that openly declared themselves to be of his opinion, and those two being his familiars, are likest to be the God-fathers. If the Child have not right for Infidel Parents sake, how can Infidel Neighbours, called *God-fathers*, give him right?

L. *But the Canon saith, that the God-fathers shall be only such as have received the Sacrament.*

M. Alas none are forwarder than these to receive the Sacrament, and laugh at it, and say they will obey the Church. Yet I doubt not but a faithful Parent may be present if he will, and may tell the Godfathers in private, that his presence shall signifie his devoting act; and when the Priest speaketh to the Godfathers, he may bow his head whether the Priest will or not, to signifie that act of his. But this is nothing to the sense of the Church, nor to our Assent and Consent to their exclusion of the Parent.

L. *I confess it sounds to me as unnatural. But what is your other reason against our sort of Godfathers?*

M. II. My second Reason is, that it is a prophanation of this great and sacred Ordinance, to invest those in the visible state Christianity (and Salvation pretendedly) that have no right to such investiture, so they have but Godfathers they are to baptize the children of any Jews, or Heathens, or open enemies to Christ, as well as of Christians; which is a manifest prophanation.

L. *What is the fault of it?*

M. 1. It supposeth a *false Doctrine*, that Infidel Children are within the Covenant, and may be baptized as well as Christians which in the Books aforecited, I have fully disproved.

2. It is a dangerous adding to God's word and worship.

3. It is a deceiving of mens Souls as to childrens state, to make them believe that their children dying when baptized are all saved, how bad soever the Parents be.

4. It is a dreadful belying of God, and prophanation of his name, if men shall in the name of God pronounce pardon and salvation to those whom he never gave them to.

L. *But God will not punish the Children for their Parents sin.*

M. Not those that see their fathers sins, and forsake them, and live not as their Parents did: and that's all that the Scripture saith for such. But if you will read my two foresaid Disputations for Original sin you will see it fully proved that God punisheth Infants, because they are the guilty, and corrupt seed of guilty and corrupt Parents. Do you believe our Church Articles, and yet deny original sin? If Infants have no guilt and sin, what need have they of Baptism, or of a Saviour? If they have need of both, sure it is for no actual sin done by them;

them; was not the World loſt for *Adam*'s ſin? Was not *Cain*'s poſterity curſed for his ſake? Were not all the Infants of the old World, and all the Infants of the *Sodomites* burnt with fire from Heaven, and the Infants of the *Canaanites* and *Amalekites*, &c. killed for their Parents ſin. Did not Chriſt tells the Jews, *Mat.* 23. that all their Forefathers perſecutions ſhould be puniſhed on that Generation? The Jews knew this that ſaid, *His blood be on us and on our Children.* Our Liturgy ſaith, *Remember not Lord our offences, nor the offences of our Forefathers*, &c.

2. And yet I tell you, that it is for their *own ſin* that the ſeed of the wicked periſh, ſin is made their own, when ſoul and body were for guilty corrupt Parents, made ſuch by themſelves. I do not ſay that God imputeth their Parents infidelity to them. But this infidelity is the reaſon of their not being delivered from their own original guilt. If Rebels forfeit Life and Eſtate, and ſo their Children live in beggery, and the King offer to reſtore Father and Children, if the Father will thankfully accept his grace: If the Parent refuſe this, his Children will be beggars. Not becauſe the King puniſheth them for their Fathers fault, but becauſe he firſt deprived himſelf of the Eſtate which he ſhould have left them, and next becauſe he refuſed to deliver them. If a Father will ſet the Pox on his children, and after refuſe a Phyſician that would cure him and them, the Phyſician doth not puniſh the children.

All Scripture and Nature tell the world that it is ſo deep an intereſt that Parents have in children, as being cauſes of their very eſſence by Communication from their own eſſence, and it is ſo natural a power that Parents have over their children, that it ſhould ſeem no ſtrange thing to Chriſtians, or Infidels, that God maketh a very great difference between the ſeed of the faithful, and of the Infidels and wicked: And it's ſtrange that any men ſhould rather lay their title to pardon and ſalvation upon a meer neighbour or ſtranger that perhaps is a wicked wretch, himſelf, than on the Parents of the child.

L. *But will God ſave children for their Parents Faith?*

M. If

M. If he deſtroy Infants for *Adam*'s ſin, do you think that Juſtice is ſo much more extenſive than Mercy, that he will ſhew no mercy for Parents ſake? But the caſe is this, Chriſt the Second *Adam* hath merited pardon and ſalvation to be given conditionally to all: Not abſolutely, for then all would be ſaved: What the condition is to the adult, we are agreed, *viz.* Faith and Repentance, and Dedication to Chriſt by covenant conſent: And do you think that Infants pardon and ſalvation hath no condition? If none, then all Infants are ſaved; if any condition, what is it? 1. Is it barely that they be *baptized* without any right but what all have? This is an injurious fiction; God never ſaid it: And it's an unreaſonable imputation on God, as if he would ſave thouſands meerly for *water and words*, and condemn thouſands that had not the opportunity of theſe. And it is certain that Chriſtians never dream'd of this abſurd Opinion, or elſe godly Emperours would have forced Baptiſm on the children of all their Heathen Subjects, and would, where their conquering Armies came, in charity, have catcht up their children, and baptized them. And Biſhops and Doctors would have taught and intreated them ſo to do. To make meer baptizing alone the condition of Infant ſalvation, is to lay Heaven on ſuch a ceremony quite out of the Infants power, as would but tempt the rational Infidels to deride Chriſtianity. No ſober men lay a childs *Eſtate* or *Life* on ſuch a thing.

2. If there muſt be ſome condition of Right to Baptiſm antecedent to it, what is it? 1. It is not actual Faith in that Infant, that underſtands not. 2. It muſt then be ſome others act or nothing. If anothers, whoſe ſhould it be ſo likely as the Parents from whom the children have their eſſence? Whom Nature hath taught to take them as almoſt parts of themſelves; and ſo hath the cuſtom of all Nations; and who are obliged above all other to provide for them, and whoſe will in their Infancy diſpoſeth of them till they come to have a rational will of their own (in act:) And Scripture from end to end confirmeth this.

But beſides this, you know not whither to look for a title-condition, unleſs to ſome Pro-parent, whoſe the child is, upon

upon the Parents Death or Resignation. For, 1. If you say it is the Faith of the *Church* (as some) that giveth the child title, what Church mean you? The Universal, or National, or Diocesan, or Parochial? And how doth the Church give right to Pardon and Life to Infidels children? If it be meerly *volendo*, as if Heaven were at their will, why do they not sit at home, and make a Deed of Gift of Heaven to the Infants at the *Antipodes*, and of all the World? If it be by baptizing them, I shewed before that Baptism, meerly as such, doth it not. And if it be the will of the Baptizer they must mean the Priest, Deacon, or another: And to say that these are the Terms of Infant Title to Baptism and Salvation, that if the Priests will they shall be baptized and saved; or else not, seemeth a New Gospel.

2. But it seems with us it is the God-fathers that give them Title, else the Church could save them when they will without God-fathers: And if so, where is the proof of it, in Scripture or Reason, that God will accept and save Infants because a meer Neighbour will bring them to be baptized, and promiseth to bring them up well if they live. It is supposed that these Sponsors own not the children, and how come they then to have the power to be their Representatives, and to dispose of their Souls?

L. *But any Beggars Child hath right to be taken into your house, if you are so charitable as to do it: And so much right to Baptism and Salvation by it, Christ hath given to all.*

M. Where is that Deed of Gift to be found? Is it not a Forgery? He hath made a Covenant to the Faithful and their Seed. But where hath he said, I will save all Infidels children, if any Priest or Christian will but baptize them? He that said, *Go to the high-ways and hedges, and compel them to come in,* excepted the Refusers, and required none but perswading compulsion: And it's Parents that have power of their children. He that can believe to day that God hath made a Gift of Salvation to all Infants that any body will baptize, may easily believe to morrow that he will not cast away the rest meerly because no Carrier will bring them in, or because no body will wash them, and say over them the words of Baptism. God hath made even in the Second Commandment, and in *Exo-*

dus

dus 34. when he proclaimed his name and nature, so great a difference between the Seed of the Godly and the Wicked, that we dare not consent to the confounding of them, nor with the Anabaptists unthankfully to deny this Mercy, nor to deny or corrupt *Pauls* plain assertion, *Else were your Children unclean, but now are they holy.*

L. III. *What mean you by your third Exception?*

M. I have told you while I opened the former. They personate the Child without Authority: And it is a great doubt whether the Covenant and Baptism were not a meer Nullity, did not Parents besides the Laws of Conformity some way signifie their own Agency therein. If any Neighbour should make a Covenant in the name of your Child, binding him at Age to Marry an Heiress, who hath a Lordship to her Portion, would this either oblige your Son, or give him any present right to her or her Estate?

L. *If the Donor or person empowered Consent, it giveth a conditional right, which becometh Actual when he marrieth her; and so here if God consent it's so far valid.*

M. God hath given Christ and Life conditionally to all before they believe or are baptized: But all must not therefore be baptized: This is not *Actual Right*, and so such Infants have no right by this Rule, till they believe in Christ. But Baptism is an actuall Marriage with Christ, and it's a Mockery where neither Party doth consent. Christ doth not consent: for he hath made no Promise but to the faithful and their Seed. Let them that affirm more, shew it. The Infant doth not consent, having no Will of his own in Act, and the thing being done by one that had no power to personate or oblige him. And he may say, It was no act of mine, personally or Legally.

L. *Any one may accept a gift for another, and bind him to gratitude, which if he refuse he forfeits it.*

M. If the Donor give it on those Terms, it's true. And if you can prove that God hath made his Covenant Gift of Pardon and Salvation to all the Seed of Infidels, Atheists and Wicked Men, on Condition that any body will but Accept it in their names at present, and bind them to accept it at Age, it will then I confess prove a valid act of Charity: And I see

not

not but why some good man should say [*Lord, I accept of Christ and Salvation for all the Infants on Earth, and I bind them to accept it when they come to Age; and I hope the meer want of washing shall not deprive them of that which I have power to accept for them.*] I never heard of valid contracts made for Infants by any one that will but pretend to personate them.

L. *Thus you would make rebaptizing necessary, if such Baptism be a nullity.*

M. 1. Not to any whose Parents, though besides the Laws of Conformity own their agency, and dedicating their own child to Christ, which I hope is the case of most, custom through God's mercy teacheth them better than the Canons and Common-Prayer-Book.

2. And I think not to any other, whose Parents in Infancy, and themselves at Age do own the Covenant, and think that it was valid Baptism. For to such the end of Baptism is attained. If it were no Minister, or were one unauthorized that baptized him, it would not be a meer nullity as to the ends, if by mistake it were supposed well done. *Factum valet*, was judged by some, when *Athanasius* by a Boy was baptized in sport.

L. *What is your fourth Objection against our way of Baptism?*

M. That in personating the Child they say that they (and so he by them) doth at present *Believe, renounce, desire,* &c. falsely intimating that *Infants are bound at present to do this by another:* And yet the same men plead that God doth not accept him for the Faith of his Parents; As if his Godfathers Faith were his, and not his *Parents:* when as God requireth no Faith, or Repentance of Infants, but only that [*They be the Seed of penitent Believers, devoted to Christ.*]

And in the Catechism it is said that [*Repentance and Faith are required of persons to be Baptized.*] (And Repentance and Faith have a promise of Life) and that Infants *who cannot perform these are Baptized because they promise them by their Sureties, which promise when they come to Age themselves are bound to perform.*

Where note that the former Book had [*They perform them by their Sureties.*] They perceived that having said *Faith* and *Repentance* are *requisite:* Infants they saw must *have at present* what is *requisite* at *present:* And they knew that they had

them not themſelves; and ſo were fain to hold that the Sureties Faith and Repentance was theirs, and a performance of that required condition. But our new Bookmakers ſaw that this would not hold, and ſo they ſay, *Though Faith and Repentance be required of perſons to be baptized, yet Infants are baptized becauſe they promiſe them by their Sureties to be hereafter performed*; amending the former errour by a greater, or a double one. 1. Granting that Faith and Repentance are pre-requiſite, and yet confeſſing that Infants have neither, of their own or Sureties imputed to them; and yet are to be baptized. 2. Or making a *Promiſe* of *future Faith and Repentance* to be *preſent Faith* and *Repentance*. 3. Or like the *Antinomians* that ſay, all that are Elected to believe hereafter are juſtified before they believe, ſo they imitate that; though Faith and Repentance be requiſite *in baptizandis*, yet God at preſent will juſtifie and ſave all that have it not in infancy, becauſe they promiſe it hereafter. All plain contradictions: as if they ſaid, it is requiſite in perſons to be baptized, and it is not requiſite.

L. *How would you have them have anſwered theſe?*

M. Profeſſed Faith and Repentance are requiſite in adult perſons to be baptized: And in Infants, that they be the Seed of the Faithful, devoted by them to God in Chriſt, according to his offered Covenant of Grace.

L. V. *What mean you by your fifth Objection?*

M. Alas, the worſt is yet behind. The common Perfidiouſneſs that is committed under the name of Godfathers Baptiſmal Vows and Covenants: Baptiſm is one of the greateſt actions of all our Religion and Lives. Our riſing from Death to Life; our viſible new Birth, our ſolemn Covenanting with God the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt: Our ſolemn Tranſlation from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that we may receive remiſſion of Sin, and inheritance among the Sanctified: What more holy, great and venerable action can be done by mortal man, than to enter a ſolemn Covenant with God and our Redeemer, in which we wholly give up our ſelves to him, and Covenant for a holy Life, and are to receive the pardon of all ſin, and the gift of Grace, and right to Everlaſting Glory: And if men turn this great Ordinance which is the Sum of all our Religion

ligion into perfidiousneſs and mockery, how hainous ſin muſt this needs be?

And here let us conſider, I. Who theſe Godfathers in *England* uſually be. II. What they do, III. How they perform what they Vow and undertake.

L. I. *They are uſually ſome of the Parents Friends.*

M. They are uſually ſuch as theſe: 1. The poor that have no rich Friends do ſometimes intreat a poor neighbour to do the Office, and ſometimes hire any man that will do it: Which I never knew till in *London*, by begging they made me underſtand that men do it as Labourer's work for their wages: About half a Crown is the ordinary pay of Beggars, or very poor Folks Godfathers. But the poor and Middling ſort do uſe to try ſome rich Friend or Neighbour, if they have any ſuch, in hopes of ſome ſmall gift; ſome give us for the Child a Shilling, ſome half a Crown, ſome a ſilver Spoon. The Richer ſort ſeek to perſons rather above than below their Rank, in expectation of a piece of Plate, or ſome ſuch bigger gift. And in other Nations Princes are Godfathers to Children whom they never ſee, nor perhaps the Land of their Nativity: And with us it is very often ſome that dwell not very near, who oft ſerve as Proxy to ſtand in their place, and they only give the expected gift and bear the name.

II. What they are to do, I told you before: 1. To perſonate the Child, and take on them to ſay as in his name [*I believe, I renounce, I deſire*] when they are *three* and the Child but one, and ſo three perſons by fiction repreſent *one*, and ſay that *He doth* that which *he doth not*, either, *per ſe vel per alios.*

2. They Vow or promiſe ſolemnly to do all the things before named. Ch. 4. *Numb.* 7. viz. *To ſee that the Child be taught as ſoon as he ſhall be able to learn what a ſolemn Vow, Promiſe and Profeſſion* he made by *them*; *and that they call on him to hear Sermons, and chiefly that they provide that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the Vulgar Tongue, and* All other things *that a Chriſtian ought to know and believe to his Souls health, and that he be virtuouſly brought up to lead a Chriſtian and Godly life.* All this they ſolemnly undertake to God and the Church.

III. And ſo far are they uſually from performing it. That 1. I never yet knew one Parent that expected any ſuch thing from them, or that ever ſeriouſly asked them, Do you underſtand what you are to promiſe? and do you reſolve to do it?

2. I never in all my life knew one Godfather that made the Parent before hand believe that he intended any ſuch thing.

3. If he had, it's not credible that three perſons ſhould all intend to educate one child of another man's, and perform it.

4. Nor did I yet ever know to this 68th. year of my age, one Godfather that before adopted the child, or took him for his own, and took him home with him, unleſs he was a Grandfather, and did it as *ſuch*, and not as *Godfather*; much leſs could all three do it.

5. Nor did I ever to this day know one man or woman that performed this which all three undertake. A very few I have known that will ask, *How doth my Godſon?* and ſay, *You muſt be a good Boy and learn your Book*, and perhaps give him a piece of Silver: But uſually they never look after them.

I confeſs with ſhame that I have been Godfather to four; to one when I was a Child and knew not what I did, but thought, it was only to be a Witneſs of Baptiſm. And to three more when I was twenty three years of age; of all which I agreed beforehand with the Parents to be but a Witneſs, and that they ſhould ſtand there themſelves as the undertakers and ſignifie it. Two of theſe I never ſaw ſince; a third now dead, I never ſaw ſince his Infancy till a little before he died, and the fourth never ſince till that lately he came a begging to me.

I confeſs one Biſhop told me once that he knew one or more that had performed this Vow, ſo did never I, who have lived in many parts of the Land. Thoſe that perform it not, ſure are guilty of heinous perfidiouſneſs; as breaking ſo ſolemn a Vow to God. And if this be ſo common in *England* that to this Age I could never know of one performer, is not the caſe doleful and dreadful: that the Nation ſhould by ſuch perfidiouſneſs be made Chriſtians?

L. *But this is the Parents or Godfathers fault, what's this to the Miniſter, or to your Aſſent and Conſent?*

M. If

M. If it be not nothing to the *Canons* and to the *Liturgy*, it is not nothing to him that must *Assent and Consent to all things in that Liturgy, and must swear Canonical Obedience.* And 1. Do you think that the Nation can so commonly live in this sin, and the Church Governours and Orders be innocent in it. Can those Canons and Orders be blameless that without any more opposition, let such perfidiousness go to our Christening? Can the medicine be laudable that so many miscarry in the use of it?

2. By the Canon all men are constrained to get some Godfathers, and they can force none that is unwilling.

3. No *Conscionable* persons will *Promise and undertake* that which they never purpose to perform. I never in all my life met with one godly man, that if you opened all the undertaking plainly to him, would say seriously, *I am resolved to do all this*; but would refuse the office when he knows it is expected.

4. If there be hundreds or thousands in a Parish that are grosly ignorant of the nature of Baptism, and what they do, or that are Atheists, Infidels, wicked men not Excommunicate, the Minister cannot deny to take them for Godfathers, if they did but ever once receive the Sacrament. And to this 68th year of my age, I never knew one Godfather, or Godmother questioned or refused by any Minister.

5. If the Parent can get no man to stand, he shall be ruined for it, as not bringing his Child to be Baptized according to the order of the Church.

6. Rich men will not give up their Children to the Godfather's propriety or education. Poor mens Children none will take. And is it lawful to Assent and Consent to such orders of Baptism as cherish this?

If Parents were the undertakers we might urge them to performance. *But from such others who can expect it?*

CHAP. XI. Point VIII. *Of refusing to Baptize without such Godfathers.*

L. *YOU have been long on this Point, I pray you be shorter on the next.*

M. It needs not many words it is so gross. We dare not

Assent:

Assent and *Consent to deny Baptism to all Children of godly Parents that have not such Godfathers and Godmothers*, while the Parent offereth to do his own part, professing his faith, and dedicating his Child to God, and promising a faithful education.

L. *How prove you that you must put away all such?*

M. 8. Did you ever know any baptized otherwise in the Church? 2. The words of the Rubrick are [*There shall be for every Male Child to be baptized, two Godfathers, and one Godmother; and for every Female one Godfather and two Godmothers.*] 3. The Godfathers and Godmothers only are to speak and covenant; without which it is no Baptism: Meer washing without Covenanting is no Christian Baptism, so that the Church of *England* doth make *Godfathers essential* to it. And what it is to *add* to the *Essentials* of so great an Ordinance of God as was instituted by Christ's own Mouth, for so high an use as our Espousal to himself; judge you. 4. The Canon to which all must subscribe, saith [*That he himself will use the form in the said Book prescribed in publick prayer and administration of the Sacrament, and no other.* 5. The Act of Conventicles maketh it 20 *l.* the first time and, 40 *l.* every time after for above four to meet to worship God otherwise than according to the Liturgy, and practice of the Church of *England.* And to *baptize without Godfathers* is *otherwise.* 6. And then the *Oxford* Act banisheth them five miles from Corporations. Is not here sufficient proof?

L. *And why should any scruple so small a matter?*

M. 1. Did I not before tell you why? 2. Suppose they scrupled it through mistake, shall every mistake or errour of Parents deprive the child of Baptism? I'll tell you why I dare no more *Assent and Consent* to this, than I dare consent to cut off a hand or foot of every such child.

1. Baptizing is Christening, and dare I causelesly deprive a Soul of visible Christianity?

2. They themselves make it an *Ascertaining means* of Salvation, as the forementioned Rubrick sheweth. And would they have us shut Infants from Salvation for nothing? yea they seem to confine Salvation only to the baptized, while they conclude that they are saved *as baptized ones*, and except the unbaptized from Christian Burial: The best can be but

to

to leave them as without any promiſe of Life from Chriſt: And how can we believe that God will give them that which he never promiſed them. And ſhall I damn ſouls for want of a humane unneceſſary, if not corrupt invention?

3. It is againſt the intereſt of Chriſt and the Church; ſhall I make a Covenant to rob Chriſt and the Church of viſible Members for nothing? Murthering Infants is death by God's Laws and mans? And Innocents day is one of the Chriſtmas Holy days. And is it a thing indifferent for me and all the Miniſters of the National Church, to make a ſolemn bargain that we Aſſent and Conſent to keep out all from the Church and from the Covenant (and in their ſenſe the hope) of Salvation on ſuch an account as this.

L. *The thing were diſmal and unexcuſable if it were as you make it: But how can you ſay that they ſhut them out when they force all Parents to bring them in, and to ſubmit to their way? when did you ever know any child refuſed on this account.*

M. Many a hundred in my time. The Law refuſeth them, and it is in vain for the Parents to ſend them to a Miniſter who they know hath ſolemnly covenanted to reject them. Hundreds have been baptized by Nonconformiſts, becauſe the Church refuſeth them.

2. And as to their compelling men to get Godfathers I anſwer, 1. Thoſe that think it a ſin will not obey that compulſion, but rather ſuffer. 2. If any yield againſt conſcience to eſcape ſuffering, ſuch compulſion doth but drive them towards damnation. 3. But thoſe that yield to it by compulſion, do but ſeem to do it, and do it not: For they agree before hand with the Godfathers, to repreſent them, and ſpeak in their names, and to be themſelves no undertakers. Though all this is very hard ſhifting.

L. *I confeſs this is a caſe ſo diſtant from things indifferent, that were there but this one reaſon, I will no more perſwade any to Aſſent and Conſent to all things contained and preſcribed, even to the uſe.*

M. And what think you if the ſame men that made theſe Canons and ſubſcribe to all this, are the ſharp condemners of Schiſm and Anabaptiſtry. 1. What is Schiſm, if this be not, cauſeleſly to keep out ſo many from the Church? And have not

not the Anabaptists a far more excusable pretence to deny the baptizing of Infants, than this in question is: The case is of great difficulty to them, and it is Christ's will that they doubt of. But here is no difficulty. And these men set the will and device of man against Christ, who said, *Forbid them not*, and *was Angry with those that forbad them to come to him.*

CHAP. XII. Point IX. *Of the Cross in Baptism.*

L. *I Have oft wondred what any man can say against the use of the Cross in Baptism, which signifieth our resolution to be true to a crucified Christ.*

M. I have oft thought many things absurd in you Lawyers, to which I have been reconciled when I was well informed of the reason of them. I ask you,

1. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the King and only universal Lawgiver to his Church?

L. *Yes, but men under him may make local Laws:*

M. 2. Do you believe that *he* is the Author of the Christian Baptism?

L. *Yes, no doubt, I find it,* Mat. 20. 19.

M. 3. Do you believe that he did it so defectively that men may amend it?

L. *No doubt but he did his own work perfectly.*

M. 4. Do you not believe that it is his Prerogative to institute Sacraments of the covenant of Grace?

L. *Yes, no doubt; for our Church holdeth that there are but two, and disowneth the five Roman Sacraments. And yet I think most of them may be called Sacraments, especially Ordination, and Matrimony (and so may the Kings Coronation) but not Sacraments of the Covenant of Grace.*

M. Let us now enquire, 1. What a Sacrament of the Covenant of Grace is. 2. Whether our crossing be not such.

I. The Romans used the word [*Sacraments*] for an external obliging covenanting ceremony: especially for the Act of soldiers ceremony by binding themselves to military relation and fidelity to their captains. A Sacrament of the covenant of grace is an outward visible Act or ceremony, by which we oblige our selves in covenant to Christ as our Saviour, promising fidelity and

and by which we are told by Christ ministers, that his Grace is signified which is given by his Covenant.

The Catechism indeed saith [*It is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given to us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.*]

But it's obvious to any man of reason, that the words, [*Ordained by Christ himself*] signifie not a Sacrament as such, but [*as Divine*] distinct from humane. Else it were impossible for man to be guilty of making false humane Sacraments.. If they should make more, just such as Baptism and the Lords Supper, they would be no sinful Sacraments, if none be Sacraments but Christs.

If there be all these things, there is a Sacrament of the Covenant of Grace falsely instituted by man. 1. If there be an outward visible sign. 2. If both the purchased and conveyed Grace of the Covenant of Christ be signified by it. 3. And so signified as to be an instituted means of conveying it. 4. If it be a sign obliging the covenanting person to his Covenant duty. 5. And if thus it be a symbol, or badge of the Order professed.

I. The outward visible sign is crossing, or the transient Image of a Cross, made by one that acteth as a Minister of Christ by his pretended Commission, and received in his forehead by the baptized.

II. The thing signified is both the work of Redemption purchasing grace, and grace given by that purchase: Both these are fully expressed, *Can.* 30. [*The holy Ghost by the mouths of the Apostle did honour the name of the Cross, so far that under it he comprehended not only Christ crucified, but the force, effect and merits of his death and passion, with all the comforts, fruits and promises which we receive or expect thereby: The Church of* England *hath retained still the sign of it in Baptism, following therein the Primitive and Apostolical Churches, and accounting it a lawful outward ceremony and honourable badge, whereby the Infant is dedicated to the Service of him that died on the Cross, as by the words of the Common-Prayer book may appear*] which words are [*we receive this Child into the Congregation of Christ's Flock, and do sign him with the Sign of the Cross, in token that he shall not be ashamed to con-*

fess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful Souldier and Servant to his lifes end. Amen.] And in the Preface of Ceremonies [*They serve to a decent order, and godly discipline, and such as be apt to stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God by some notable and spiritual signification, whereby he may be edified.*]

So that the thing signified is Christ crucified with the benefits of his Cross, and the Grace of edification by stirring up our dull minds by the moral causality of the cause, and binding us to constancy to Christ.

L. *But moral causing by objects works not on Infants.*

M. True, no more doth washing in water, and yet this is used for the benefit of the Parents at present, and of Infants when they are at the use of reason. Indeed Christ by his own Sacrament giveth Right and Relative Grace, which he will not do by mens inventions.

III. But man plainly appointeth the Cross to work this grace by way of exciting signification.

IV. And it is expresly made man's covenanting sign, by which he bindeth himself to covenant fidelity; that he will not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight, *&c.* The whole duty of the covenant on man's part is promised hereby.

V. And the Canon tells you it is a dedicating Sign and Badge of our profession.

So that I see not what is wanting to a Sacrament, as far as man can make one, by presumption, which we cannot consent to.

L. *But it's said that Baptism is perfect without it.*

M. So it is without the Lord's Supper; and yet that is justly added: It saith not that mans covenanting with God is perfect without it: For it seemeth a Sacrament of man's added to that of Christ, to tie men faster to him.

L. *Ancient Christians did use the Cross without scruple.*

M. 1. It is not all use of the Cross that we speak against: but using it as a Sacrament of the Covenant, and badge of Christianity: The King would not take it well if Subjects presume to make a new Badge of the Order of Knights of the Garter, and add it to the Garter and the Star. To shew by an action

action as well as by a word to scorning Heathens that they were not ashamed of a crucified Saviour, might be more excuseable than this. And they foresaw not to what abuse it would be after turned.

2. But suppose we mistook in these our fears of sinning; 1. Do you think that the case hath not difficulty enough to excuse a man for fear of sinning?

2. And do you think that for such fear, and not acting against them we deserve to be cast out as heinous uncapable delinquents?

CHAP. XIII. Point X. *Of denying Baptism to them that refuse the Cross.*

M. BUT the practice of Crossing is disputable, and I lay not so sharp a censure on them that differ from us in it: But what excuse can be made by a man of Christian charity, and consideration for denying Baptism to all that refuse this crossing, I confess I cannot imagine, nor could ever hear.

L. *Their excuse is, that Crossing being lawful, the Refusers are disorderly Schismaticks, and they and their Children (as theirs) uncapable of Baptism. They say it is not they, but you that are the Refusers. They offer to baptize you or your Child, and you refuse it.*

M. 1. They know that it is not Baptism, but Crossing that is refused: And if they will not administer one without the other, they are the refusers. If one refuse the Papists Exorcism, Salt, Spittle, *&c.* and they will not baptize without it, do they not deny to Baptize, unless one will receive all these? If God will justifie them for rejecting all that think it a sin to receive their Crossing, then it is not them to whom it is to be imputed. But can that be true?

1. Christ that instituted Baptism, ordained the conditions of it, and the qualifications of such as shall be baptized, *Mat.* 28. and *Mark* 16. 16. He that believed was to be Baptized, *Act.* 28. If thou believe with all thy heart thou mayest: No, saith the Canon you shall not, though you repent and believe, unless also you will take the covenanting Badge of the Cross. Is not this to alter the terms of Christ's Covenant and Sacrament,

and directly to contradict his very fundamental Law of Christianity? *Baptize all that are made disciples*, saith Christ, and *all that repent and believe*: No saith our Convocation, *baptize none of them that will not take the transient Image of a Cross, for their farther obligation.*

2. Do you that think it is necessary to Christianity and Salvation *know* that this *Federal Crossing* is lawful? if you affirm it, you must say the same of all ceremonies of the same importance, and so must make a hundred new Articles of Faith, even of Ceremonies and such little things, and make them all necessary to Christianity and Salvation? And is not this to make a new Gospel, Christianity, and Church, and to turn Christ's easie Yoke into a worse than the slavery of Pharisaical Traditions? And is not this to shut all, or almost all men out of Heaven? No one in earth doth know that this, and all such ceremonies, and inventions of men are lawful: And must every one know it that will be a Christian, or have his child made one? Or must we all (as necessary to Christianity) believe all such things lawful if the Clergy do but say they are? And what if the Clergy in one Land say it is, and in another, say it is not: Must both be believed? Have wise Bishops no fitter penalty to enforce their usurping Canons by, than denying Christendom and Salvation? One would think it should be enough for the Preachers of humility to say, [*We are so wise that he that differeth practically from us in that which we call an indifferent ceremony, and he calls a sinful corruption of Baptism, shall be punished as much as Swearers, Drunkards and Fornicators be, or shall be made a slave with his Children*] without denying them *Christianity and Salvation.* But the best is, all cannot keep men out of Heaven that boast of the power of the Keys; and there is one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy.

L. You make a heinous cruelty of it, as if it were oppression and tyranny to souls, and they say that they impose nothing on you but things indifferent.

M. Must their indifferent things be enforced with so great penalty as damnation? If every one cannot love every Dish that they love, or get down every Pill that they give him, but he be famish'd therefore, or have his throat cut wider? I had rather live and die a Chimney-sweeper, or a Chan-

nel-

nel-cleanſer, or a Keeper of Swine, than a Biſhop that ſhould put Chriſt's Diſciples and their ſeed, whom he commandeth them to baptize, *Mat.* 28. 19. from his Covenant and Church, and ſpecially when themſelves make Baptiſm more neceſſary and certainly ſaving, than it is.

L. *But you may venture to baptize ſuch if you will.*

M. What, when I have covenanted *Aſſent and Conſent to all things in their Book*, and ſubſcribed to *uſe no other form* in baptizing; and alſo muſt be *caſt out for it*?

CHAP. XIV. Point XI. *Of rejecting from Communion all that dare not kneel in the act of Receiving.*

L. *I Hear that you receive the Euchariſt Kneeling your ſelf, and take it for lawful: what then have you againſt the Canon or Liturgy for this?*

M. I am my ſelf for the lawfulneſs of Organs, Rails, and Coming up to them, and for the lawfulneſs of Kneeling when we ſing Pſalms, or read the Scripture, or hear the Preacher. But I am not for the lawfulneſs of hanging or damning men that herein are not of my mind: Nor for turning unneceſſary things, becauſe they are lawful, into conditions, *ſine quibus non*, of Church Communion, and Engines for Satan to divide Chriſt's Flock by, and perſecute men for fearing ſin. *Paul* was for the lawfulneſs of uſing, or not uſing, the meats and days mentioned, *Rom.* 14. 1, 2. But he was not for either judging or deſpiſing one another about them, much leſs for caſting men from the Church and Heaven for them; nor for ſaying, *except ye be Circumciſed ye cannot be ſaved.*

L. *Nor doth the Church make Kneeling in Receiving neceſſary to Salvation, but enjoyn it as a decent Ceremony.*

M. They that make this Kneeling neceſſary to Church Communion, and avoiding Schiſm, and make Church-communion and avoiding Schiſm neceſſary to Salvation, do make the ſaid Kneeling neceſſary to Salvation. But ſo do the Canoniſts here: *Ergo.*

How uſually do they apply Chriſt's words to the Sacrament [*Except ye eat the fleſh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you?*] If Communion herein be not neceſſary, how come

come all the dreadful Sermons, and Volumes to thunder damnation againſt thoſe that do but ſtay away through fear of unpreparedneſs, and they muſt be Excommunicated that Communicate not twice a year with them; yea though they communicate elſewhere with Nonconformiſts.

L. *Wherein lyeth the ſinfulneſs of Conformity here?*

M. I. In ſubſcribing, Aſſenting and Conſenting to this. II. In practiſing it againſt Godly Believers.

L. *I have heard that* 1661. *at the* Savoy *they maintained that the Liturgy did not bind you to put away them that do not Kneel, and ſo you might ſubſcribe to it.*

M. This quibble ſerved mens turn that were reſolved it ſhould be ſerved. The caſe was this: They required us to lay by inconveniencies, and name only flat ſins which the Liturgy required; we gave them in a Catalogue of eight. This was the firſt, *Denying the Lord's Supper to all that durſt not receive it Kneeling.* They were hereupon divided among themſelves: Dr. *Pierſon*, and Dr. *Gunning* and *Sparrow* who were the Diſputants, in policy finding that they ſhould be hard put to it to juſtifie ſuch rejections deviſed this evaſion, that the *Liturgy did only bid them give it Kneeling, but did not forbid them giving it to others.* Dr. *Morley* and others were againſt their opinion, and ſo they were divided: But they permitted the Diſputers to go on (it being the laſt day) in the way that ſerved their preſent turn. But the caſe is clear.

1. The Canon forbids them on pain of Suſpenſion to give the Sacrament to any that Kneel not. And they all take the Oath of Canonical Obedience: And though *in Licitis & honeſtis* be added, the terms ſignifie that they are to take the Canons as *Licita & honeſta:* And theſe Canons, *ipſo facto*, Excommunicate all profeſſed Nonconformiſts.

2. They all ſubſcribe to uſe the form of adminiſtrating Sacraments in the Common-Prayer book, and no other.

3. The Church therefore expounds its own meaning in the Liturgy by the Canon, that [*give it to them Kneeling*] ſignifies *give it only to ſuch.*

4. If any doubt of it let them try, and their *Suſpenſion* according to the Canon will expound it to them.

L. *If*

L. *If the practice be sinful in rejecting such,* Assenting and Consenting *and* Subscribing *to do it must be sinful.*

M. The sin lyeth in what I before said about refusing Baptism. 1. It maketh new terms of Church Communion.

2. It contradicteth Christ's appointed terms, which require all Christians to receive each other in Love and Concord: And *Paul* expresly decideth such cases, *Rom.* 14, and 15. *Receive one another as Christ received us to the Glory of God.* Will Christ that receiveth them to pardon, grace and endless Glory, own these Rejecters and Condemners? Or will he not say, In as much as ye did it to one the least of these my brethren, ye did it to me? And who is he that condemneth, when it is Christ that justifieth?

3. They shall answer for depriving Christ's Members of their right, as truly as if they oppressed Widows, and Orphans, and turned them out of their houses, and inheritance.

4 They shall answer for Schismatical tearing the Church by their Engines.

5. And for usurping a needless and hurtful dominion over mens faith, and consciences by their Church Legislation.

6. And for using that office which is made for the edifying and comfort of the Faithful, to drive conscience and obedience to God out of the world, by making doubtful, ensnaring Impositions; and then persecuting and rendring odious all that dare not obey them for fear of sin, while they bear with the Rabble that hate serious godliness, and encourage them by preferring them in their communion.

L. *But what pretence have any against Kneeling?*

M. 1. It is not a necessary point of Salvation or Communion, and therefore if they err they are not therefore to be Excommunicate, unless you will Excommunicate all that have errour and sin, that is, your selves, and every living man.

2. They have the pretence of real fearing that it is a sin to differ in the Gesture from Christs administration, thinking that a Table gesture was intended by him to signifie his sacrifice-Feast.

3. They fear breaking the Second Commandment, which is against corporal seeming to worship as Idolaters do, though the heart mean better; and so against symbolizing with Idolaters,

laters and againſt ſcandalous hardening them in their ſin: Becauſe Papiſts are known to kneel to the Bread as unto God and worſhip it. And theſe Papiſts live among us, and are now hoping to ſet up their Idolatry. Though for my part I think that the publick Doctrine of the Church, takes off this argument of Scandal, yet it is ſuch as very Learned and holy men think valid: as you may ſee in Mr. *Rutherford*'s Letters, and many others.

4. And *ad hominem*, I ſee not what the Excommunicators can ſay for themſelves, while they condemn all of Schiſm that obey not General Councils, eſpecially the four firſt, and that differ from the Univerſal Churches cuſtoms: And yet the very firſt *Nicene* Council, and divers after forbid all Kneeling in adoration on any Lord's day in the year, and on any weeks day between Eaſter and Whitſunday. And all the Ancients aſſure us that this was one of the chief ceremonies that the Church then called Univerſal agreed in. And it was never put down by any other General Council, but at *Rome* grew out of cuſtom by degrees, and that not till a thouſand years after Chriſt as Dr. *Heylin* confeſſeth. And ſhall theſe ſame men that cry up the Church and the Laws of Councils Excommunicate thoſe that obey them as Schiſmaticks, and paſs for the followers of the Church themſelves?

In a word, I dare no more caſt godly Chriſtians from Chriſts Sacrament, for fearing leſt Kneeling in Receiving be a ſymbolizing with Idolaters contrary to the Second Commandment, than I durſt turn Widows and Orphans out of their inheritance for not ſpeaking the ſame language, or wearing the ſame faſhions as I do.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV. Point XII. *Of Consenting to the false Rule to find out Easter-day in the Liturgy.*

M. THE next Point is materially a trifle, but formally so palpable an untruth, that we cannot deliberately declare that we Assent to it, *viz.* They tell us in their Calendar truly how to find Easter-day, and they add another Rule to find it *always* which is frequently false, as every Almanack will tell you: *viz.* that [*it is always the first Sunday* after the *first full Moon, which happens next after the one and twentieth day of* March.]

L. *It is true for the most part, though not always.*

M. And we will Assent that it is true for the most part, but not *always.*

L. *This is but a mere mistake, and can you scruple Conformity for such a trifle?*

M. Is it lawful deliberately to lie in a trifle? In them it was but an untruth, for they wrote what they thought had been true. But it would be a wilful lying in me who know it to be false.

L. *But you may in your Subscribing, or Declaring except that which you know the Authors would have excepted, had they known them to be false.*

M. Say you so? Then I may except all the rest which I here except against; For Truth is so naturally the object of the Intellect, that I may suppose that the Convocation would have put none of them on us, had they known them to be false

Do you mean that I may except them in *words* or *writing*, or only *mentally?* If the first, I have offered them to declare my Assent and Consent to all things in the Book in which the Authors were not mistaken: But that is refused with derision, and is contrary to the Act of Uniformity, which saith; [*They shall declare in these words and no other.*] If you mean *mentally* than a man may Covenant, or swear any falsehood with a mental exception; and so any Dissenter may subscribe, or covenant what you will.

L. *But you know these two most knowing men,* Grotius *(de Jure Belli) and Bishop* Jer. Taylor *(Duct. Dubit.) maintain that useful Lying which hurts no one, is no sin : A man's Life may be saved by a lie.*

M. And in my *Housholders Catechism* on the ninth Commandment I have fully confuted it, to which I refer you : No man's private commodity or life must be preferred before the common welfare of Mankind : Why do Souldiers hazard their lives, and Malefactors lose them, but for the common good and safety? But if men had leave to lie when it is for their safety, or commodity, it would utterly overthrow all humane Converse and Societies, by overthrowing all Trust and Justice : Rulers and Subjects, Preachers and Hearers, Judges, Jurors, Witnesses, Traders, Contractors, would all find some reason from their commodity to Lie. Laws are made chiefly for the *common safety* and *profit*, and must not allow a *single persons* to the common hurt.

L. *I confess the reason is weighty : But most men will but laugh at you to suffer ruine rather than to Assent to so harmless a Lie as that is.*

M. It is to God's Judgment that we stand or fall, who hath decreed to cast out of his Kingdom all Lyars, *Rev.* 21, and 22.

L. *It's a wonder to me that all the Bishops, Doctors, and Church of* England *should publish and impose such a mistake, and never a man of them examine it, and detect it : And yet a greater wonder that the Lords and Bishops and Commons in Parliament should pass and impose it without examination?*

M. Neither of them is any wonder to me, considering who the men were, and in what circumstances, and what moved them : No more than that they would rather *England* were in the case it is in, than to have forborn any of their impositions, called *Things indifferent*, or than the King's *Declaration of Ecclesiastical Affairs*, should have healed us.

But do you think that such mens Volumes are like to be so infallible in matters of *Faith*, *Doctrine* and *Right*, who no more examine plain Matters of Fact, as that all the Clergy may boldly declare Assent and Consent to all contained in, and prescribed by their Book? And that before they ever see it : And did not Convocation, Parliament, and the whole Decla-

Declaring Clergy go one way, and notably Truſt ſome body? And are we not excuſable for trying further? Doth this common belief deſerve honour and preferment, and our unbelief of ſuch things deſerve ſilencing and ruine?

L. *I marveil what they ſay to this, who expound their Aſſent and Conſent as to the* Uſe: *If they* Uſe *this Rule we muſt keep two Eaſters oft, one at a right time, and another at a wrong.*

M. It's enough to juſtifie themſelves, to call Refuſers Schiſmaticks, Rogues, and diſobedient to Government, as the poor Proteſtants are called in *France.*

CHAP. XVI. Point XIII. *Of Pronouncing all ſaved that are Buried, except the Unbaptized, Excommunicate and Self-murtherers.*

L. *WHat are the words hear that you diſlike?*

M. I told you before, [*For as much as it hath pleaſed Almighty God to take to himſelf the Soul of our dear Brother, here deceaſed*] and [*We give thee thanks for that it hath pleaſed thee to deliver this our Brother out of the miſeries of this ſinful world*] and [*That we may reſt in him as our hope as this our Brother doth*]

L. *What harm is in theſe words? muſt not charity be uſed in our judging of all mens final ſtate.*

M. We like all the Office, and theſe words very well, if uſed over the Corps of capable perſons; and if true Diſcipline in the Church did make a juſt Separation of the capable and uncapable.

L. *Then the fault is not in the Liturgy, but the Government.*

M. It only follows that the fault is Primarily in the Governours corruption, and neglect of Diſcipline; but it's next alſo in the Liturgy? For the *matter* of *fact* and *right* is preſuppoſed to the *Declaration* of it: And it followeth not that becauſe I may ſpeak well of good men, I may do ſo of bad. Chriſt will condemn thoſe that feed not, viſit not, harbour not his Servants, *Mat.* 25. All men ought to be his Servants and deſerve this. Yet multitudes in *Scotland* ſuffer now, for feeding and harbouring rebellious ſubjects: Suppoſe

they ſay now that the fault was not in us that fed them, but in them that were Rebels; we were bound to feed honeſt men, and they were bound to be honeſt, and charity judgeth the beſt. I think this will not ſave ſome from the Gallows.

I think if the Biſhops were but to bury Souldiers killed in fighting againſt the King, and at the Grave ſhould pronounce them all good *Subjects*, it would be ill taken; much more is it to pronounce them ſaved.

Charity is no excuſe for dangerous errour and falſhood. It muſt not follow a blind underſtanding. I am ſure that the Clergy in their Sermons and Writings, condemn abundance whom at the Grave they pronounce ſaved.

L. *But what danger is it to judge too charitably?*

M. It hath all theſe Dangers. 1. The guilt of ſpeaking falſely to God.

2. The contradicting of God's Word, which ſaith, that no Whoremonger, Drunkard, Railer, Murtherer, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of God, and that the impenitent ſhall periſh.

3. The hardening of ungodly men againſt all fear of God, when they hear that the ſame men, that in the Pulpit threaten damnation to them, recant it all in their Application at the Grave, and pronounce them ſaved. How could they more dangerouſly deceive men, who take that in deeper uſually that is ſaid at the Grave, than in the Pulpit?

L. *But ſome ſay none of thoſe words ſignifie the perſons Salvation, but his removal hence.*

M. Read them; If thoſe do not, none do.

L. *But ſome ſay, that by* [Excommunicate] *is meant* [Excommunicable] *or ſuch as ought to be Excommunicate, and then what more can you deſire?*

M. Their ſaying is a preſumptuous contradiction to that which they conſent to; what reaſon have they for it? Is *Excommunicate*, and *Excommunicable* all one? Or may they put what ſenſe they liſt on Laws? If they do but tell the Biſhops this much, they will make them know that they are not made Judges of who is Excommunicable: When I have craved but the alteration of that word, they anſwe-

red

red me with contempt. that so every Priest or Curate should have the power of damning whom he please. But sure Silencing our judgment of a man, is not damning him.

But what place is there for any doubt, when the Book nameth the three sorts excepted, *& exceptio firmat regulam in non exceptis.* Yea the expres exposition in the Canon 68. is [*If he shall refuse to Christen the one, or bury the other (that is, Any brought) except the party deceased were Denounced Excommunicate,* Majori Excommunicatione, *for some grievous and notorious Crime, and no man able to testifie of his repentance, he shall be Suspended by the Bishop of the Dioces from his ministry by the space of three months.*] And alas how many thousand Infidels, Hobbists, Sadduces, Hereticks, Adulterers, Thieves, Perjured, Scorners at Godliness, *&c.* are among us unexcommunicated. If all in *England* be saved, except the Unbaptized, Excommunicate, and Self-murtherers (which, *de singulis*, one by one must be said of all the rest) either Scripture and Pulpits are much mistaken, or else we that live among men are in a dream, and our senses are all deceived.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII. Point XIV. *Of Consenting to Read the Apocrypha.*

L. *WHat harm is there in reading the Apocrypha?*

M. I told you that we scruple not reading most of it in the place of Homilies or other Books; especially the Books called *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*.

But, 1. Many Bishops and Doctors of the Church of *England* have accused the Books of *Tobit* of down right Lies, and the Books of *Judith*, *Bell*, and the *Dragon*, &c. as being meer fictions. 2. And when we read these, it is to be done in the same order as we read the Scripture, by the name of Lessons, which is the Title given to the Chapters read out of the Old and New Testament. 3. And, if we could yet read all these, that will not serve unless we declare our *Assent*, *Consent*, and *Approbation* of the *Appointment of them in the Book*, which we cannot do.

L. *But they are for the most part to be read but on week days, or holy days.*

M. The Conforming Clergy Consent and Covenant to the Imposition that requireth them to read the Common-Prayer every day in the Week, unless they be hindred by sickness or some urgent cause. And so it is still the Publick Service.

God's Service is all to be done with holy Reverence, and if the Book of *Tobit* and some others be guilty of so many gross falsehoods, as Protestants have and do still accuse them of, I fear both to use them as Lessons in the place of God's Word, lest it be prophanation, and also to subscribe, or declare my Approbation of the Calendar, and that use, lest I be guilty of the sin of all the Ministers in *England* that so use it. And it's dangerous to seem to tell the people that so many Books are God's Word that are not such: For they understand not the Greek word *Apocrypha*, and every Reader at least that is not Licensed to Preach, is forbidden by the Canon to expound even that one word to them.

CHAP. XVIII. Point XV. *Of Assenting to mis-translations, and Subscribing that they are not contrary to the Word of God.*

L. *ARE not the Epistles and Gospels used according to the last Translation?*

M. Yes, in the new Books they are, but the Psalms are not.

L. *What great mis-translations are there?*

M. Sometimes a whole Verse or more is left out, and sometimes the Translation is quite contrary to the Text. As *Psal.* 105. 28. [*They rebelled against his word*] instead of [*They rebelled not against his word.*] And in the Book (which this justifieth) are many in the Epistles and Gospels; I have cited them at large elsewhere.

L. *How cometh there to be so many faults in the old Translation?*

M. The work was an excellent good work: But the Authors (it seems for want of skill in the Hebrew) followed the Septuagint Greek translation, which hath these and many such defects.

L. *Sure it is lawful to use and follow the Septuagint, for the Apostles did so in the New Testament.*

M. 1. The Apostles sometimes use it, and sometimes follow the Hebrew against it, and sometimes neither. 2. But to Use it is one thing, and to Justifie it is another thing. It was in common use in the time of Christ and his Apostles, and they used that in speaking to the People, which use made intelligible and acceptable. And we scruple not using it: But all the works of Man are imperfect, as Man is: And why must we subscribe that there *is nothing in it contrary to the Word of God?* When as every mistake in it is contrary to it.

L. *It seems then you would not subscribe to the Bible, that there is nothing in it contrary to the Word of God?*

M. I will subscribe to the truth of all that is in the true Copies of the Original, if there be any such: And I will submit

ſubſcribe that the various Lections in thoſe Copies that we have, are not the failing of the Holy Ghoſt, or Apoſtles, nor are ſuch as leave us in juſt doubt of any neceſſary Truth? And I will ſubſcribe to the Tranſlation ſo far as it agreeth with the Original. But I will not ſubſcribe that any Tranſlation is perfect or faultleſs, or to this or that Hebrew or Greek Copy, as if in every word or Lection it certainly agreed with the Autographs. And why ſhould men make ſnares for the Church, by impoſing Profeſſions, that any mere man's works are perfect, when all mortal men are confeſſedly imperfect? Is it not enough peaceably to uſe them, and to profeſs that all the Word of God is infallible Truth?

L. *But I cannot think that an Approbation of all the Tranſlations is intended in your Aſſent and Conſent.*

M. Are they no part of that which is contained in the Book, and preſcribed by it? Or could not the Parliament ſpeak ſenſe?

CHAP.

Chap. XIX. Point XVI. *Of Consenting to reject all from Communion, who desire not our Episcopal Confirmation.*

L. *METhinks you that have written a Book for Confirmation should not scruple consenting to this?*

M. I told you that I am so far from scrupling the true use of Confirmation, that I think it is the want of it that is the greatest corruption of the Church of any outward thing that I remember. But you must note, 1. That it is the English way of Confirmation that we speak of. 2. And that it is not the thing it self, but the denying men Church-communion that neither have it, nor desire it, which we here dissent from.

L. *What mislike you in the English way of Confirmation?*

M. I must first tell you how the case stands in matter of fact: 1. When Christ sent forth Preachers, he endued them, not all, with equal Gifts and Power: Tho' most had some extraordinary Gifts and Inspiration, it was made, tho' not proper to the Apostles, yet for the most part their priviledge above all others, that the Holy Ghost was given to those on whom they laid hands, for miraculous acts; especially sudden speaking of Tongues not learnt, and Propheſying; tho' the gift of Sanctification necessary to Salvation was given to all true Believers, by whomsoever converted.

2. When the Apostles were dead, and these miraculous Inspirations grew rare first, and then ceased (unless in some very rare instance) yet the ordinary Pastors continued the Custom after Baptism, to lay on their hands as for the giving of the Holy Ghost. As they did also the Ceremony of Anointing the Sick, which had been used for miraculous Cures.

3. The dead Ceremonies of *laying on of hands* for the Holy Ghost, and of *Anointing*, being used without the *Power* and former Effects, somewhat else must be thought on to keep up their reputation. And as to that now in question, first they added more to the Ceremony of it, and Anointed the Person with Oil, and made the sign of the Cross on him, thereby to signifie his being Anointed with the Holy Ghost, and fortified thereby to follow a Crucified Christ thro' Sufferings. And when it was seen that the Holy Ghost was not thereby given for Miracles, they though

that he was given in a double degree for Corroboration: And ſome thought that he was not given at all in Baptiſm, (that did but waſh away guilt) but by Confirmation after.

4. Hereby Confirmation got the name of a Sacrament (as Anointing the Sick alſo did) and was uſed preſently after Baptiſm for the moſt part; and the Ceremonies of it were made more pompous, and it was appropriated to the Biſhop, for the moſt part; or if Presbyters did it, they muſt uſe no Ointment to Anoint and Croſs them with, but what the Biſhop made by mixture, and bleſt, to make it holy: And becauſe he could not go himſelf to the ſick, the Presbyters muſt fetch all their Ointment for this alſo, ready made and hallowed from the Biſhop.

5. When Infants were baptized, they thus preſently Anointed them alſo, and called it their Chryſm and Confirmation, till then he was taken but for a half or imperfect Chriſtian, that was only baptized, and not confirmed.

6. Popery having turned moſt of Chriſts Ordinances into a dead Image, uſed theſe called Sacraments, to keep up a Ceremonious ſhew of Religion, and to keep up the power of Biſhops in that formal way.

7. When Reformation prevailed, the Papiſts ſeven Sacraments were examined; and only Baptiſm and the Lords Supper found to be Chriſts Sacraments of the Covenant of Grace: *Ordination* to be the Miniſterial Sacrament of Orders, or Conſecration to that Office. *Matrimony* to be a common Domeſtick Sacrament of Marriage: *Confirmation* and *Extream Unction*, to be abuſive imitations of Antient Miraculous Acts: And *Pennance* to be ſome expreſſions of Repentance made more neceſſary than indeed they were, and Arbitrarily impoſed by mans invention to keep up the Dominion of Ambitious Prieſts over the Souls of deluded men: Tho' at firſt only introduced by meer Direction of Miniſters to men of troubled Conſcience, ſhewing what reſtitution and reparations of the hurt they had done by ſin were neceſſary, and what expreſſion of their Repentance was moſt fit.

8. Hereupon the Reformers caſt away the Sacraments of *Pennance* and *Extream Unction*, and reduced the four firſt to their Primitive State and Uſe: and the abuſed way of *Confirmation* they caſt off, but ſome deſired to make an advantage of the name, for another end and duty of great moment, which had been neglected to the great corruption of the Church. And the Church of

England,

England attempted to do this, reserving as much of the Antient Form as possibly they could.

The *Adult* were of old Baptized before Infants, and never without a most solemn personal Profession of Faith and Repentance, and absolute dedication to Christ. And that this might be done with the greatest weight and resolution, they were usually taught as Catechumens till they came to understanding and resolution, before they were admitted to Baptism. Their Infants some brought to Baptism, and some delayed till they came to Age, all being left at liberty, and neither Adult nor Infant driven to Baptism, nor accepted till it was desired. But as Prelacy grew up to Dominion, all were forced to be Baptized in Infancy; and at last such growing up in ignorance, were all taken for Christians, while few knew what Christianity was, or what it was to be Baptized, or what was there promised on their part, or on Christs. And when these came to have children, they were baptized and bred up as their Parents were, and Christianity for the most part turned into meer Name and Ceremony, the Persons being mostly ignorant of its Essentials.

This corruption of the Church seemed to many to come only from Infant Baptism; whereupon they turned Anabaptists, and taught that men should not be baptized till they seriously and solemnly professed their own Faith and Repentance.

But wiser men saw that we must not deny Infants their Church state and right because of mens abuse, and their neglect of other Duties: Baptism is one thing, and Personal confession and covenanting is another. It is the Omission of these at Age, that hath corrupted the Church, and not Infant Baptism, which entreth them but into a Church state suitable to their Infancy. They need not repeat Baptism which they had; but to manifest actual Faith and Repentance which in Infancy they had not. That which should be done, is to make their Transition into the Communion of Adult Christians to be a *serious, solemn work*, and not a delusory Ceremony. That those baptized in Infancy may learn what they did, and what Christianity is, as to our Faith, Duty and Hopes: And when they come to true resolution, to own the Baptismal Vow, and as solemnly renew it themselves, as others made it for them.

The English Reformers therefore did retain the Ceremony of Imposition of Hands, and the appropriation of it to the Bishop, and the name of Confirmation, and stretcht the use of the Sign

Impoſition of Hands) to the utmoſt that they durſt, but inſtead of applying it to Infants, they made it the owning of the Baptiſmal Covenant, and appointed Catechizing to go before it, and call for a ſolemn performance of it. And were it uſed as a rational ſober owning of the Baptiſmal Covenant indeed in an underſtanding, ſerious manner, for tranſition into the State of Adult Communicants, it would be the greateſt means of a true Reformation, and of Union with the parties that now differ about Church Order, that can be uſed.

Divers of the higheſt Epiſcopal Divines write as earneſtly for this as any of us: Eſpecially Mr. *Elderfield* and Dr. *Hammond*, and yet were it to prevent our continued diviſion, and our ruine, there is no hope of obtaining it.

L. *Why, what hinders if all ſides deſire it?*

M. It is deſired as *Holineſs* is deſired; ſeriouſly by the ſerious; reſervedly, and by halves by the half Chriſtian; and only the *Name*, *Image* and *Ceremony* by the groſs Hypocrite, who hateth it at the heart, becauſe it is above him, and againſt his carnal mind and intereſt.

And indeed it is here made impoſſible to be done any otherwiſe ordinarily than as a Ceremony. For, 1. The Dioceſſes are ſo vaſt, that the Biſhop cannot do this and other his Offices for the hundredth part of his undertaken Flock. Suppoſe this Dioceſs have but five or ſix hundred thouſand Souls (for when an hundred thouſand died the laſt Plague, I hope it was not above the ſixth part:) Do you think that the Biſhop is able (did he work as hard as any Nonconformiſt) to confirm ſix hundred thouſand Perſons, or the twentieth part of them, or the hundredth, in that ſerious manner as belongs to the binding of a Soul to Chriſt in ſo ſolemn a Covenant?

It becometh me not to enquire whether Biſhops be men that are for ſo much ſeriouſneſs in Chriſtianity themſelves, and ſo much labour to attain it: Some are far better than others: You know them as well as I. But I muſt ſay, 1. That as far as I can learn, there is not one of a hundred confirmed at all.

2. All the thouſands that are unconfirmed live in the Pariſhes as reputed Chriſtians, and may come to the Sacrament when they will.

3. I never knew one Miniſter of all that covenanted it, to keep one man from the Sacrament for not being Confirmed, or not

not being desirous of it; nor one Neighbour that ever was examined on this Point, whether he were confirmed, or were ready and desired it.

4. Some few elder Votaries to the Bishops perhaps may be serious in it; but what a meer running Ceremony it is usually made, I need not tell you. I have formerly said, that I was at 15 years of Age confirmed my self, by Bishop *Morton* (one of the Learned'st and best Bishops that ever I knew) and we ran thither from School, without the Ministers knowledge, or one word from our Master, to tell us what Confirmation is; and in a Church-yard in the Path-way, as the Bishop past by, we kneeled down, and laying his Hands on every Boys Head, he said a few words, I knew not what; nor did any one of my School-fellows, as far as I could perceive, know what he said; nor know what Confirmation is, any more than to have the Bishop's Blessing: nor were we ask'd by him, or any, whether we stood to our Baptismal Covenant, save only by saying by rote the Catechism to our Master: nor did I see any one make any more than a Ceremony of it.

When the Bishops were down, I saw it made a serious Work by divers Ministers, who instructed Young Men till they found them seriously resolved for Christ, and then taking the best of Confirmation and Penitence, caused them publickly before the Congregation to profess their Faith and Repentance, and to renew the Covenant they made in Baptism to Christ. And were it made the work of godly Ministers to do it, or to prepare Men personally for it, and not make it a Game for Boys, much good might be done by it.

L. *Well, What have you against it besides Abuse, which no body desireth you to subscribe to?*

M. Were I a publick Minister, I should be glad of that Rubrick to enable me to keep away the grosly Ignorant, which I know no other clause that enableth me to do: But I durst not use it, to turn from Communion all godly Persons whom it excludeth; nor can I consent so to do.

L. *What can make godly persons scruple it as sinful?*

M. Many things: 1. The words make it seem to some to be yet made a Sacrament, which are [" *Upon whom after the example of thy Holy Apostles, we have now laid our hands to certifie* " *them by this sign of thy favour and gracious goodness toward them.*]

[Here

Here is an outward visible sign of *an inward and spiritual Grace given to them*, said to be done in imitation of Christ's Apostles, *as a means whereby they receive the same, and a Pledge to assure them thereof*; (as the Collects with it shew) which is the Catechisms definition of a Sacrament.

2. They that are against our Diocesan sort of Prelacy, dare not seem to own it, by coming to them for Confirmation, appropriated to them.

2. Those that think that a great and holy Duty is made a meer mockery to delude Souls, and corrupt the Church (while every one in *England* that will but take this Ceremony, is pronounced to God in Prayer to be [*Regenerate by the Holy Ghost, and all their sins forgiven them*;] these dare not joyn themselves with the Prophaners in their delusory way.

Be these scruples just or unjust, while the same persons are willing to own their own Baptismal Covenant, understandingly and seriously before the Church and their own Pastors, and to know those that labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and esteem them in love for their Works sake, and to be at peace among themselves, I dare not for scrupling this Diocesan Ceremony, cast them from the Communion of the Church of Christ. And therefore I dare not approve of the Order that requireth it, nor assent and consent to it, nor subscribe that it is not contrary to the Word of God.

Chap. XX. Point XVII. *Of Consenting to all the Ornaments of Church and Ministers that were in use in the Second year of King* Edw. 6.

L. WHat have you against this?

M. The words are, [*That such Ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof, at all times of their Ministration, shall be retained in use as were in this Church of* England *by the Authority of Parliament in the Second year of King* Edw. 6.]

Against this we have these Exceptions.

1. We know not what was then in use, and therefore cannot consent to we know not what.

2. We are told that the Albe, and many other Ornaments were then in use that are since put down, and we must not consent

ſent to reſtore them, without more reaſon than we hear. And the Canon enumerating the Ornaments now, we ſuppoſe the addition of all thoſe will contradict it.

3. We meet with few Conformiſts that know what was then in uſe. And we ſee that all thoſe that ſubſcribe or conſent to this, yet uſe them not. And we will not run for company into a ſolemn Covenant conſent, to the uſe of thoſe things that we ſee no body uſe. The ſecond year of King *Edw. 6.* was the minority of the Reformation, and before we conſent to make it our pattern, we muſt know what it was, and whether no Act of Parliament have ſince reverſed that which then was uſed?

Chap. XXI. Point XVIII. *Of giving an Account to the Ordinary of all that we keep from the Sacrament, that he may proceed againſt them according to the Canons.*

L. *WHY cannot you Approve of, and Conſent to this?*

M. For many and great Reaſonss. 1. From the Ordinary. 2. From our Selves and our Miniſtry. 3. From the People. 4. From the Church. 5. From the Nature of the Matter.

L. I. *What have you againſt it from the Ordinary?*

M. I told you before that, 1. Some of the Ordinaries are Laymen, ſitting in Courts to Decree Excommunications and Abſolutions, proper to the Clergy. And we ought not to conſent to the guilt of this.

2. Other Ordinaries are ſingle Presbyters, that have no power of the Keys from Chriſt over their Brethren, and over a multitude of Churches.

3. Other of the Ordinaries are Dioceſans over Hundreds of Churches that have no Biſhops of their own under theſe. And we ought not to own any of all theſe.

L. II. *What Reaſons have you from your ſelves?*

M. If we ſhould accuſe to the Ordinaries all that we ought to keep away, it will utterly deſtroy our Miniſtry. 1. We are bound to keep away all that deſire not Epiſcopal Confirmation. 2. All Ignorant Perſons that are unready to be Confirmed. 3. All Atheiſts, Infidels, Hereticks, ſcandalous Sinners, and that live in malice to others, much more to the generality of godly men.

4. All

4. All the Nonconformists whom they call Schismaticks, that kneel not, *&c.* And in a Parish of 30000 or 40000 in *London*, it's well if of all these sorts there be not many thousands. And 2. The Ordinaries Courts are full of other work: And in the Countrey they are oft far from most Ministers. 3. Ministers have usually much more work than they can do at home, and less money than they need: And the Prosecution of all these, and bringing up Witnesses, will take up all their time, and leave them none for their Studies, or many other Offices at home: And it will undo them in their Estates. 4. It will make the People so much to hate them, that their Preaching will do little good. 5. And when they know all this, none of the Ministers will practise it as Experience tells us; and so they will all live in the breach of the Covenant which they made; and when to get a living they have falsly professed Consent to all this Accusation and Prosecution, Self-love will not suffer them to do what they consented to.

L. III. *What are your Reasons against it from the People?*

M. 1. The Multitude that makes it unpracticable. 2. The greatness of some of them that will ruine the Ministers. 3. But especially because it will cross the just end of our Ministry, and make them uncapable of receiving any Profit by us: And our Power is given us for their Edification, and not for their Destruction: This will but harden them against our Doctrine.

L. *Do not you by this condemn your selves that desire a stricter Discipline, which would offend them more?*

M. No; For, 1. We would not turn our Churches into Prisons, nor bring in any under our Discipline, but consenting Volunteers.

2. We would have no Lay-men, or forced Ordinaries to do this, but Pastors of their own choice, whom they well know.

3. We would have nothing done against any sinner Magisterially and forcibly by the abuse of the Keys; but only humble Ministerial convincing them by God's Word of sin, and of God's wrath, and praying for their repentance, and meek and patient warning them, and waiting till they prove obstinately impenitent: And then only an Exclusion of them declaratively from that Communion from which they exclude themselves, without any force on their Goods or Persons.

L. IV. *What are your Reasons from the Church?*

M. 1.

M. 1. We ought not to consent to so great a corruption of its Discipline. 2. Nor to a course that will render it odious to men. 3. And deprive it so much of the true work of a faithful Ministry.

L. 5. *What mean you by your reasons from the Matter?*

M. The ordinary proceeding according to the Canons must cast out a multitude of truly godly Christians; and then they must be further prosecuted and ruined; as we shall see anon under the particulars. And we cannot Covenant and Consent to be prosecutors of such men, before such Judges, for such an end, and to such direful Effects.

CHAP. XXII. Point XIX. *Of Publishing the Lay-Chancellors Excommunications and Absolutions according to the Canons.*

L. *How are you bound to publish their Excommunications?*

M. 1. By our Ordination-Covenant to obey the Ordinary. 2. By the Oath of Canonical Obedience. 3. By this assent and consent to the words last mentioned, to accuse them, that the Ordinary may proceed against them according to the Canon. 4. By constant custom: If we do it not, we shall be suspended or cast out.

L. *But the Oath of Canonical Obedience is but* in licitis & honestis.

M. I told you before, it implyeth that all that is Canonical is *licitum & honestum.* And they will not allow us to be Judges, but will suspend us if we refuse their commands as unlawful and dishoneſt. And the Canon it self *ipso facto* Excommunicateth all that say any of their Governing Offices are contrary to the Word of God, or that the Canons bind not Dissenters. And so far is the Church from taking this for *unlawful* or *dishoneſt*, as that it expresly commandeth it in these words, *Can.* 65.

[" All Ordinaries shall in their several Jurisdictions carefully see " and give order, that as well those who for obstinate refusing " to frequent Divine Service Established by publick Authority " within this Realm of *England*, as those also (ESPECIALLY " OF THE BETTER SORT and Condition) who for noto-

" rious contumacy, or other notable crimes ſtand lawfully Ex-
" communicated —— be every ſix Months enſuing, as well in
" the Pariſh Church as in the Cathedral, by the Miniſter openly
" in time of Divine Service, upon ſome *Sunday* denounced and
" declared Excommunicate, that others may thereby be admo-
" niſhed to refrain their Company,—and excited the rather to
" procure out a Writ *de Excommunicato capiendo*;] ſo that no man can be a Miniſter that will not practiſe it.

L. *And what have you againſt the practice of it?*

M. 1. To be the Agent of Lay-mens Excommunicating 2. And the Inſtruments of godly mens Excommunications and Ruins. You may as well ask us why we dare not oppreſs and deſtroy men without cauſe; the Publiſhers cannot be Innocent.

CHAP. XXIII. Point XX. *Of Publiſhing Excommunications according to the 4th Canon.*

M. THE Fourth Canon ſaith, [" *Whoſoever ſhall hereafter* af-
" firm that the Form of Gods Worſhip in the Church of
" *England* Eſtabliſhed by Law, and contained in the Book of
" Common Prayer and Adminiſtration of Sacraments, ——con-
" taineth ANY THING in it that is repugnant to the Scrip-
" tures, let him be Excommunicated *ipſo facto*, and not reſtored
" but by the Biſhop of the place, or Arch-biſhop, after his Re-
" pentance, and publick Revocation of ſuch his wicked Error.] And when this Excommunication is ſent from the Ordinary to the Miniſter, you heard he muſt publiſh it twice a year.

L. *And what have you againſt this?*

M. Do I need to tell you? 1. Judge by this with what Face the Prelates call us *Puritanes* or *Catharists*, as if we pretended to perfection, and to be without ſin. And whether it be not they that are far liker to the *Catharists*. We confeſs that the beſt of our Prayers, Preaching or Works hath ſomewhat in them repugnant to the Word of God: For Gods Law is perfect, and every ſin in *matter*, or *manner*, or *end*, or *degree*, is repugnant to it. Far it be from us Phariſaically to juſtifie any Book that ever we write as if we had no ſin in it. But theſe men that call themſelves the Church of *England*, do not only juſtifie a large Volume of Forms, Orders, Rubricks and Kalenders, &c. but alſo force

all

all other men to justifie it all as sinless; and he shall be no Minister that will not do it, nor a Christian Member of the Church that denieth it: As if the perfection of their works were an Article of the Creed, and necessary to Salvation to be believed. Is not this Puritanism, Pharisaical, and Justification of Works.

2. Judge by all that I have in this Book cited, whether there be *nothing at all* in their Books that is repugnant to the Word of God. If I have made it past all modest denial, then what a dreadful thing is this Renunciation of Repentance? when Repentance is the condition of the pardon of all our sin, even that which cleaveth to our Worship of God. But they that tell the World that their Works have no sin, yea and force all the Kingdom to stand to that justification, do in a very high degree renounce Repentance: Yea they not only forbid all men to call them to repent, or to amend any sin that is in their Book, but Excommunicate them as wicked that do it.

3. I told you before, that this Excommunicating *ipso facto*, is in it self, a prophane subversion of the very nature of true Excommunication, which supposeth due means to convince the Person that his words or deeds are sin, and that of an intolerable degree, and that he be heard speak for himself, and be admonished and earnestly perswaded to repent; and not Excommunicated till after all this he continue impenitent. But here men are Excommunicated for saying that there is somewhat faulty in mens works, and that before ever they are heard speak for themselves, or ever told of their sin, or called to repent: I before referr'd you to what *Spalatensis de Rep. Eccles.* hath written to prove the great sinfulness of such Excommunicating. Bishop *Jer. Taylor* writing against it, yet feigneth this excuse, that it must be understood but of the *Minor Excommunication.* But *Excommunication* it is; and I do not think that they can make any good sense of their distinction of *Major & Minor Excommunication*; unless it be that the *Major* declareth men to be no Christians, and the *Minor* only to be *scandalous Christians*, not cut off from the Catholick Church, but only for the present suspended from being owned, while they are under patient tryal whether they will prove impenitent or not, that shame may drive them to Repentance. But this Suspension is not properly called Excommunication. But both of them require a just tryal.

4. It is a heinous injury and injustice to Excommunicate and

Ruine men for Truth and Duty. He that robbeth them by the High-way, doth but take their Money, and doth not alſo accuſe them falſly, and make their duty to be their ſin. Doubtleſs he that will take all that I have becauſe I do my duty to God in Praying or Preaching, doth me more wrong than he that will take all without accuſing me.

5. It is a publick turning Chriſts Ordinance againſt himſelf and ſerving Satan by it, to make faithful Chriſtians odious in the World, as unworthy to live in humane Society, out of Jayls, if they do but exhort others to repent. If a man but know and detect the leaſt ſin in their Books of Service, he muſt be condemned of wicked Error, and Drunkards, and Whore-mongers, and Perjured Rogues, do ſeem to be no worſe than he.

6. If it were an Error to ſay that their Book is no faultleſs, yet it can never be proved an Error of that magnitude and wickedneſs as to deſerve Excommunication *ipſo facto*: For all men on Earth have Errors worſe than that; and ſo by proportion they virtually or conſequentially Excommunicate all men.

L. *But all this is their fault, and not yours.*

M. It's mine if I publiſh their Excommunication.

L. *If an Innocent Man be hang'd, the Hang-man is Innocent: He doth but his Office.*

M. Whatever he may be in Caſes unknown to him, and which he was not bound to know, I will not believe you in a known or knowable Caſe. If I had been commanded to Crucifie Chriſt, to Stone *Stephen*, to burn the Martyrs, I do not believe that I could have done it without the guilt of Murder. Elſe you may make a Man's command to Juſtifie the Execution of any Murder or Injuſtice in the World.

L. *But you may ſhift off ſuch wicked Excommunications, and leave the Publiſhing them to your Curate.*

M. 1. I may not draw another into ſuch heinous Guilt, nor connive at his doing it in my Charge.

2. There are but few Country Miniſters that have Curates.

3. If I do it not, I am guilty of it if I declare my *Conſent* to Accuſe all ſuch within *fourteen days*, that the Ordinary may do it; and to Covenant and Swear Canonical Obedience to him.

4. What can be more pernicious to the Church of God, than to caſt good Men out of it, and diſmember Chriſt's Body, and lay thoſe in Jayls as unſufferable wicked men, whom Chriſt takes

takes for his Members whom he will save; and all this for telling Prelates that their Book is faulty, and desiring any amendment of their work: while Swarms of flagitious Men are endured, and by this encouraged to scorn at Conscience and fear of Sinning, and to take their wicked lives to be better than the Godly Conversation of those that are used far worse than they? Thus Christ foretold his Apostles, that they should be cast out of the Synagogues. But as he found and saved the healed Man, *Joh. 9.* whom the Pharisees had cast out; so he will own and gather his Flock, and take their wrong as done to him.

CHAP. XXIV. Point XXI. *Of Publishing Excommunications according to the Fifth Canon, about the Articles.*

L. WHat is the Fifth Canon, and its Excommunication?

M. [Whosoever shall affirm that *Any* of the 39 Articles agreed on——1562. *are in any part Superstitious or Erroneous, or such as he may not with a good Conscience subscribe unto, let him be Excommunicated* ipso facto, *and not restored but only by the Arch Bishop after his Repentance and publick Revocation of such his wicked Errors.*

L. *I hope you that agree with the Church in Doctrine, have nothing against Publishing such an Excommunication.*

M. I Subscribe to the Doctrinal Articles as true, because I judge of them by what I take to be the Authors meaning: But 1. The words in the obvious sence, are divers of them liable to Exceptions. 2. And some of them about Traditions, Ceremonies, *&c.* are of small moment and dubious. 3. And every word that is true, is not an Article of the Creed, nor necessary to Church Communion; so that all Men must be cast out of the Church that dissent from it. And this Excommunication extends to Lay-Men (who are not bound to know as much as Ministers.)

L. *What is there in the Articles that any good Man can scruple?*

M. Article 3. Learned Men doubt of Christ's going down into Hell.

Art. 4. That Christ's Body in Heaven hath Flesh and Bones, is contrary to two General Councils, that of *Nice* 2. and that before it at *Const.* which it confuteth: And in this they agree.

Art. 8.

Art. 8. That *Athanasius*'s Creed ought to be *omnino recipiendum & credendum, wholly received and believed:* when the Damning part is scrupled by many Conformists.

Art. 9. Bishop *Jeremy Taylor* was against that of Original Sin.

Art. 10. Many, called Arminians, are against that [*No Power to do good Works.*]

Art. 11. Many Conformists are against the word [*We are accounted Righteous before God only for the merit of Christ*] because a subordinate Righteousness is mentioned many Score or Hundred times in Scripture.

Art. 12. Many think that good Works *spring not necessarily from Faith*, but *freely.*

Art. 13. Many think that merit of Congruity may be held, and that Men by natural or antecedent Works, may be made *meet* to receive Grace; which Dr. *Hammond* in his Annotations seemeth much to insist on, under the Name of *Probity.*

Art. 14. The said Dr. *Hammond*, and many other, write for good Works over and above God's Commandments, as only counselled by God, and voluntarily done, which this Article calleth *Arrogancy* and *Impiety*; And many follow Dr. *Hammond*, and yet subscribe this.

Art. 15. Is denied by them, that think Infants sinless when Baptized.

Art. 16. Many deny falling from Grace given.

Art. 17. Dr. *Hammond*, and his Followers, seem to deny the absolute Election here described.

Art. 18. Many good Men think some are saved that live up to the Light of Nature; and yet this Article curseth them that say so.

Art. 19. The Description of the Visible Church greatly disagreeth from that now given by many great Church-men, not at all mentioning the Bishops or their Government in it. And some deny that the Church of *Rome* hath Erred *De fide.*

Art. 20. The Churches Power to decree Ceremonies, as not limited here, is doubted of by good Christians. And they see not how that is not made necessary to Salvation (contrary to this Article) which is made necessary to avoid *Excommunication* as for *wicked Errour.*

Art. 21. Too many deny what is said here against gathering Councils without the Will of Princes, and that Councils may err in things pertaining to God, *&c.*

Art. 23. Seems defective about calling Miniſters to them that are for uninterrupted Canonical Succeſſion, *&c.*

Art. 25. Contrary to this Article, ſome great Church-men think that Confirmation, at leaſt, is a Goſpel-Sacrament, and that it hath a viſible ſign ordained by God.

I will proceed no further herein. By this it is evident, that many Subſcribers are great Nonconformiſts, and if they ſpeak their Minds, are Excommunicated *ipſo facto.*

L. *You make our Articles of Religion a doubtful thing; what certainty then is there of the Proteſtant Religion?*

M. The Proteſtant Religion is the Holy Scriptures, older than our Form, called *the 39 Articles*; which are a laudable ſound account how we underſtand the Scriptures, but not of ſuch perfection, that all Men muſt be Excommunicate that ſay any word in them is faulty.

CHAP. XXV. Point XXII. *Of Publiſhing the Sixth Canons Excommunications.*

L. *What is the Sixth Canons Excommunication?*

M. "Whoſoever ſhall affirm, that the Rites and "Ceremonies of the Church of *England* by Law Eſtabliſhed, are "wicked, Antichriſtian, or Superſtitious, or ſuch as being com- "manded by lawful Authority, Men who are Zealouſly and God- "ly affected, may not with any good Conſcience approve them, "uſe them, or, as occaſion requireth, ſubſcribe unto them; Let "him be Excommunicate *ipſo facto*, and not reſtored till he re- "pent, and publickly revoke ſuch his wicked Errors.

L. *I confeſs it ſounds harſhly to lay ſo great ſtreſs on every Ceremony of the Church, as to Excommunicate every one that Calleth any one of them unlawful. What could be ſaid more of the Ten Commandments, or the Creed? If it be a* wicked Errour *to miſtake about a Ceremony, or to account a Cope or a Pair of Organs unlawful, the Lord have Mercy on us, what a Caſe are we all in by wicked Errours! What ſhall my poor Country Neighbours and Tenants do that few of them underſtand one half the Creed?*

M. Yet 1. The Articles and our Ordination-Vow oblige us to believe and teach that nothing is neceſſary to Salvation, but what is contained in the Scripture, or certainly proved by it.

And that General Councils, and all Men are fallible: And ſure they are very near to Infallibility, who are ſo Infallible about every Rite and Ceremony, that they dare bind all the Land to juſtifie, or not blame them, on pain of *ipſo facto* Excommunication.

2. Yet *Grotius*, and Biſhop *Taylor*, that juſtifie ſome Lying, are Men that deſerve Praiſe, with them (and in truth:) And Oh! how many Thouſands live quietly in their Communion, who err in greater Matters than a Ceremony?

3. And judge by what I have ſaid of the Symbolical Croſſing in Baptiſm, Godfathers, *&c.* whether it be a wicked Errour deſerving Excommunication and Ruine, to charge any one of their Rites with Sin.

4. Was it not enough to caſt us out of Miniſtry and Maintenance for blaming a Ceremony, but they muſt caſt us out of the Church? what is Phariſaical if this be not?

CHAP. XXVI. Point XXIII. *Of Publiſhing the Seventh Canons Excommunications.*

M. THe Seventh Canon is [" Whoſoever ſhall hereafter af-" firm that the Government of the Church of *England* " under His Majeſty, by Arch-biſhops, Biſhops, Deans, Arch-" deacons, and THE REST THAT BEAR OFFICE in the " ſame, is Antichriſtian, or repugnant to the Word of God; Let " him be Excommunicate *ipſo facto*, and ſo *continue* till *he* repent " and publickly revoke ſuch his wicked Errors.

L. *Mark here that* [And] *connexeth all theſe Offices, it is not* [OR] *disjunctively: So that you fall not under this Canon if you condemn every Church Office ſave one, if you condemn not all.*

M. That's a meer violent unjuſt expoſition. The *Government* is the thing named as conſiſting of many Offices, as a Body of many Members, or a Chain of many Links; as we ſay, *Bonum eſt ex Cauſis integris.* And he that wounds any one Member, wounds the Man; and he that breaketh one Link, breaketh the Chain: And he that accuſeth any one part of the Government, accuſeth the Government thereby: And there is no doubt in the World but they ſo intended that made this Canon.

L. *And what have you againſt your Obedience to this.*

M. You

M. You may easily know what, by what is already said; 1. I have fully proved as aforesaid in my Treatise of Episcopacy, that if Episcopacy were never so certainly of Divine Institution, this Form of Diocesan Prelacy deposeth *quantum in se*, the old Church Form, the old Episcopacy, the old Presbytery, and almost all true Discipline, and in stead of each, sets up that which is repugnant to the Word of God. And must we all confederate to maintain this Church Corruption; and all agree to renounce Reformation, or any Conviction tending to Repentance?

2. I have told you what it is for Lay-men and Courts to arrogate the Decretive Power of the Church Keys, and for single Priests and Officials to rule all the Clergy and People as under them; And for one Prelate to undertake to be the sole Bishop over many Hundred Churches; And then to Govern *per alios*, in a secular manner, even by Lay-men, that do that in his Name which he knows not of, and this in order to Gaols and Ruine. If all this be agreeable to God's Word, what is contrary to it?

3. I have told you what it is to make every Church Officer so necessary, as that it should be Excommunication to say Any one of them is sinful, when as Learned good Men as most the World hath, have written to prove almost all of them sinful corrupt Inventions of Arrogance; and that it's far worse for Men to presume to make new Forms and Offices of Church Government, than new Ceremonies.

4. The Parliament of *England* condemned the Oath called the *&c cætera* Oath in the Canon of 1640. And the late long Parliament of 1662. never restored it, nor any since. And was it not formed according to this Canon? What's [*&c.*] but [*And the rest that bear Office therein*] *(reliquos ad ejusdem gubernaculum constitutos)* For my part, tho' I have oft read over *Cousins* Tables, and the Canons, I do not yet know and remember all the Church Governing Courts and Offices? How many there be besides the Bishop, the Chancellors Court, the Arches, the Prerogative Court, the Arch-deacons, Commissaries, Officials, Surrogates, I know not. And are every one of these become as necessary to be taken for lawful as the twelve Apostles, or the Articles of our Creed? For my part I am far from thinking that those Bishops and Doctors should be Excommunicated or Damned, who by Faction are drawn to deny the Ministry and Churches that have

not Prelatical Ordination and Government; and shall all be condemned that think as ill of Civilians Excommunicatings?

5. I have told you what it is for every Lord, Knight and Gentleman that doth but say, that any of these Church Governing Offices are against the Word of God, to be *ipso facto* an Excommunicate man. And for the people to be put to question whether they may chuse them for Parliament men? and whether they may sit in Parliament while Excommunicate.

L. *This Canon with the three or four adjoining make me begin to think hardlier of the Canoneers than I thought I should ever have done, as to their honesty.*

M. I would not have you think too hardly of them; but only to think truly of Nonconformity.

Chap. XXVII. Point XXIV. *Of Publishing the 8th Canons Excommunications.*

L. *What is the Eighth Canon and its Excommunication?*

M. "Whoever shall hereafter affirm or teach that "the Form and Manner of making and consecrating Bishops, Priests "or Deacons containeth ANY THING in it that is repugnant to "the Word of God,——Let them be Excommunicated *ipso facto*, "and not to be restored until he repent, and publickly revoke "such his wicked Errors.

L. *What have you against the Execution of this?*

M. A great deal. In sum, it is unrighteous, oppressing and dividing, to cast out all Persons from the Church of Christ, who think that nothing is faulty in the *Book* of Ordination, or in their Principles or Practice there expressed: And we dare not curse those that Christ doth bless; should we do this for a Benefice, in what should we differ from the sin of *Balaam*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness? whose iniquity and madness his Ass rebuked, saith St. *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 15. Yea, shall we not be far worse than he, that for an House full of Silver and Gold could not go beyond the Word of the Lord, and did not curse but bless God's people? And it is not proud malignant Tongues reviling God's Servants, and calling their Opinions wicked *Errors* that will make Christ disown his Members, or will warrant *Balaam* or us to curse them. O how unlike is this to the Spirit and Ministry of

of Christ! for Prelates and Priests to curse, and cast out the Children of God, for saying that they go against his Law?

L. *But what is amiss in the Book of Ordination?*

M. I am anon to tell you that. But if there were nothing amiss in it, yet the belief of its innocency is not necessary to Salvation.

L. *But if every man have leave to accuse the Orders of the Church, what Order can be maintained?*

M. 1. Leave modestly to express dissent in a doubtful case may stand with Order. 2. If men do it disorderly, there be other Penalties besides *ipso facto* Excommunication: Every breach of the Peace is not Rebellion, nor punisht with Death.

But I'll tell you briefly what may occasion good men to say that their Ordinations are sinful.

1. In that they thereby obtrude Pastors on the Churches upon the bare choice of a Patron, without or against the peoples wills.

2. In that they professedly ordain such as their Canon forbids to Preach or Expound any Doctrine.

3. In that they determine that Bishops, Priests and Deacons are three distinct Orders, which yet is an undetermined Controversie among even the Learnedst Papists. And must we damn, and cut off men for that which the very Papists leave at liberty?

4. In that they ordain men to an Office which Scripture maketh no mention of. Dr. *Hammond* saith, that it cannot be proved that there were any Presbyters subject to Bishops in Scripture times, nor any but Bishops: None that had not power of Ordination and the Keys; nor any Bishops of a multitude of Churches and Presbyters, both which are here ordained.

5. In that they Swear Obedience to Arch-bishops and their Sees; and make Priests Covenant Obedience to their Ordinaries, as aforesaid.

If a godly man do as *Bucer* did to King *Edward* the Sixth, as you may see in his *Script a Anglic.* and desire some of these faults to be amended, doth he deserve to be cast out as an impenitent wicked man for this? when they that will say, all's well that the Bishops do, may live quietly in open vice or ungodliness. As Dr. *Stoughton* saith, *If you strike a Schismatick, and Christ find a Saint lye bleeding, and you be to answer for it, I would not be in your*

case for all your wealth. If you must kill a Fly on the Forehead of a Child of God with a Beetle, or a Butcher's Axe, you shall not use my hand to give the blow. If *Chrysostom* would rather have his hand cut off than give the Sacrament to a wicked man, tho' a Prince; I will rather have mine cut off than reject a Saint, or my Tongue cut out than curse Christ's Members, lest he say, I cursed him in them.

Chap. XXVIII. Point XXV. *Of Publishing the Excommunications of Canon 9th, 10th, 11th. Of such as call Dissenters a Church.*

M. THese Canons made against Schismaticks and Conventicles do Excommunicate all that say such are true Churches that have groaned under the burden of grievances, *&c.* And is this a just cause of Excommunication?

I wish they had no such burden laid on them to make them groan. But suppose them quite mistaken; if a weak mistaken Christian may be a true Christian, tho' faulty, why may not a mistaken Congregation be a true Church tho' faulty? I hope no man of Protestant Faith and Charity will take the Errors of such as they describe for worse than the Papists; and yet how many have written (tho' confusedly) to prove the very Church of *Rome* a true Church, tho' sinful. Yea, I hope few Protestants will say that our Separatists have half so great Ignorance, Error and Corruption, as the *Moscovites*, *Greeks*, *Abassines*, *Copties*, *Jacobites*, *Nestorians*, *Armenians*, who yet are commonly by us confessed to be true Churches.

If they be no true Churches, it is either because of the greatness of their Errors, or because they go against the Law or Will of Governors; not the first, as the foresaid instances shew not the latter; for no man ever yet owned that Principle, that it can be no true (tho' faulty) Church, that is gathered against the Rulers wills. For many hundred years the Orthodox did it justly; and afterward when some did it unjustly, the culpability made it not a nullity. Else what a case was the *Roman* Church in, that for many hundred years was kept up by Rebellion against their Lawful Emperors and Princes? And how oft have a great part of the *Greek* Churches been guilty of it?

And

And do not the Condemners hereby imitate the Separatists in the sin, and reviling as they are reviled. The Separatists falsly say that you are no true Churches, and you requite them with saying falsly the same by them.

Chap. XXIX. Point XXVI. *Of Executing Canon* 27. *rejecting Nonconformists from Communion.*

L. *This is but the same that we heard before.*

M. Before I speak against publishing Excommunications: This Canon commandeth the Minister executively before they are Excommunicated to give the Sacrament to no one that receiveth it not kneeling, or that is guilty of any of the foresaid Points of Dissent, unless he confess his fault, and promise to do so no more. So that here the Minister is to be himself the prime Executioner against such Dissenters, before the Courts or Ordinaries Excommunicate or meddle with them.

L. *But none subscribe to this Canon.*

M. I told you they Swear Canonical Obedience; and the Canon suspendeth them if they do not do it: Therefore it is a necessary part of Conformity.

But of this I spake before about Assent and Consent.

Chap. XXX. Point XXVII. *Of refusing Communicants from other Parishes, Canon* 28.

L. WHY *may not this be obeyed?*

M. In some cases it may, when Persons straggle without cause: But there is frequent need that will justifie it as a Duty: Parish Bounds are a humane Order for conveniency; but the benefit of an able faithful Minister, and the choice and use of such where they may be had, is of Divine Appointment, and a matter of far greater weight. The Canon supposeth Ministers that neither can nor may be suffered, to Preach or Expound any Doctrine; If a Neighbour Parish have an able Teacher, must he drive away poor hungry Souls that seek his Consolatory Communion and Help? If Parishes that are bound to maintain their own Poor, suffer any of them to be in danger of perishing by

by cold or hunger, a Neighbour Parish tho' forbidden by men, is bound by God to relieve them in distress: Every Christian is related to all the Catholick Church, and as he hath need, hath right to the Communion of Saints, out of his Parish.

In *London*, where some Churches have excellent men, if a Lord or Gentleman live in a Parish where a Patron hath set over them, one that Preacheth not sincerely but railingly in strife, contention, or gross Error, why may not such a man go to a Neighbour Church? And why must that Neighbour Minister repel him? When yet our Antagonists in this case, maintain that the Catholick Church, being but one, every Christian must Communicate in every place where he hath occasion: And that a Diocess is the lowest sort of Church, of which Parishes are but parcels: And consequently a man never separateth from his Church, that separateth not from the Diocesan.

Chap. XXXI. Point XXVIII. *Of Canon* 38. *Excommunicating Ministers that repent of Subscribing.*

M. IF Subscribing prove a Sin, (of which I am past doubt) this Canon commandeth the Excommunicating Men for repenting of Sin. Whereas Christ's Law of Excommunication is to Excommunicate none but for not repenting of Sin. Are not these two very contrary? And do you think that Christ will stand to such an Excommunication? or disown them that are thus cast out? Some Mens abuse of Excommunication is such, as if at last, if all their Canons be executed, they would tempt Men to doubt whether they live like Christians, because they are not Excommunicate; and would make it a good argument, [*He is cast out of the Church for Conscience sake:* ergo, *it is a good sign that he is a Man of Conscience.* Or as if they were but fulfilling [*They shall cast out your names as Evil doers*, &c.]

L. *Why should you put Cases that may never come to pass? I do not think you were ever commanded to Publish an Excommunication against any such.*

M. But to Promise and Swear Canonical Obedience, is a thing that is required of us all: And promising to Sin, is Sin, and oft worse than a sudden act. Yea, if a Minister do but omit some Forms

Forms or Ceremony by this Canon, he must be first Suspended, and then Excommunicate, and I must publish it if required.

Chap. XXXII. Point XXIX. *Of the Execution of the 57th Canon.*

L. WHat is the 57th Canon, and its Execution?

M. It Suspendeth, and after a Month Excommunicateth all that go for Baptism for their Children, or Communion themselves from their own Parish, because the Minister is no Preacher, to another Parish that hath a preaching Minister. When if these be Pastors, and feed the Flock, they had more need to drive such Men to Preaching Ministers, than from them.

L. *But the Validity of the Sacrament dependeth not on the worthiness or ability of the Minister.*

M. 1. But the Edification, and consequently the Salvation of Souls, hath no small dependance on the Ability and Ministration of skilful faithful Pastors; as Mens Health and Lives do on skilful Physicians. And no man should deny himself the benefit of such that can lawfully have it, nor should starve his Soul in Obedience to Canons. If Preaching, and that soundly and skilfully, be as needless as such men pretend, why did Christ Preach, and send out Preachers? and why did *Paul* so dreadfully charge *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. 2. to *Preach the Word, and be instant in season and out of season*, &c. And why doth he so urge the Ephesian Elders, *Act.* 20. to imitate him that taught them publickly, and from house to house, day and night with tears. And why do the Prelates make every Priest Covenant in their Ordination to instruct the People out of the Scripture, and with all faithful diligence to Minister Doctrine, and teach the People with all diligence to observe God's Commandments, and to use both publick and private Monitions and Exhortations, as well to the sick as the whole, within their Cures, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given. Why do they Ordain them all to be *faithful Dispensers of the Word of God?*] Is all this done by mere Reading that which a Woman or a Boy of 12 years old can read as well as they? Do these Men know what Souls are worth? how

how the Reason and Will of Man are moved? How strong Sin is, and how blind and bad the Heart of Man?

L. *But it is the Sacraments that they are forbidden to go far from an unpreaching Minister.*

M. 1. Other Canons also forbid them oft to Hear in other Parishes. 2 If my Need and God's Law oblige me to choose a better Pastor than that ignorant Reader, tho' in another Parish; is it not fit, and my Duty to Communicate with him that I justly take for my Pastor?

Moreover, I must tell you, that when an ignorant Fellow taketh on him the Sacred Office which he is unfit for, and so liveth in the constant Sin of omission, and of Prophanation of Holy Things, and of betraying Souls, I take it to be a Sin to harden and encourage such a bold Presumer in so great Evil, and to encourage People that need better to be content with such a Pastor; Tho' I determine not whether he have the Essentials of the Ministry, and tho' I doubt not but the Sacraments are no nullities to them that take him for a true Minister.

And yet I must add, that there are some Abilities Essential, without which no Man is truly a Minister of Christ: And this Essential Ability, as certainly reacheth to the work of Teaching, as to Administring Sacraments; He is not worthy the Name of a Minister that denies this. I would not strain this Necessity over high: But I say, that he is no Minister that wants Essential Ability: And if the Papists and their Emissaries would make the People believe that all not ordained by Prelates are no Ministers, and that such excellent Men as *Blondel, Chamier, Saadeel, Dalle,* and all such abroad are none, I think them more excusable who take him for none that cannot Preach, and must be forbidden to Expound any Doctrine. If it were for want of Tongue and Voice he could not read: If it be for want of Knowledge, can that Man be by Office a Teacher of Christian Doctrine that knoweth it not, and cannot teach it? and cannot do that for his Flock that every Parent and Husband should do, whom the Children and Wives are commanded to learn of.

L. *A man may read sound Doctrine that understands it not, and by reading may teach others.*

M. But he is not capable of the Office of a Teacher of Christianity, that understands it not: no, nor so much as of Christianity it self, or adult Baptism. A Turk that believeth not the Gospel

Gospel may read it: And you may write it on a Pillar, and that may teach Men, and yet Pillars and Books are not Pastors.

L. *But what's all this to your Conformity?*

M. 1. It's unlawful for me to Swear Obedience to this. 2. Or to publish an Excommunication against good Christians, for not despising their Souls, and the Preaching of the Gospel. 3. Or to repel such Persons if they seek to me for any Pastoral Helps, and Sacramental Communion.

Chap. XXXIII. Point XXX. *Of Canon* 58 *that maketh the Surplice necessary to Ministration.*

M. I Am not determining whether it be any Sin to wear a Surplice, nor censuring any man for it: But when it is known how many learned and excellent Ministers have been against it, I take it for a greater Sin than I will name, to eject them from the Ministry for it; and I cannot approve of such a Canon. But enough of this before.

Chap. XXXIV. Point XXXI. *Of Christening all Children without Exception, according to Canon* 68.

M. THe words are [" No Minister shall refuse or delay to " Christen any Child according to the Form of the Book " of Common-Prayer, that is brought to the Church to him upon " any *Sunday* or Holy-Day to be Christened.

I have said so much of this before, that I here only say briefly,

1. This supposeth a false or unproved Doctrine, that the Infants of all Atheists, Infidels, Jews, Hereticks, Blasphemers, *&c.* are in the Covenant of Grace, so far as to have right to be put by Baptism into present Possession of Pardon, and of right to Salvation.

2. When none must be delayed that are brought to Church, the Minister cannot so much as enquire whether the God-fathers know what Christianity is, or are Christians, or Jews, or Infidels. Or whether ever they received the Lord's Supper; which the Canon makes necessary.

3. Till they have given the Church proof from God's Word, that all Infants in the World have right to Baptism, it is too great Domination over mens Faith to command Obedience on pain of Suspension. Had we given no better proof for the Holiness and Baptism of the Seed of the Faithful, than these men bring for the Seed of Infidels, most good Christians had turned Anabaptists long ago.

Chap. XXXV. Point XXXII. *Of Can.* 27. *Against Fasts and Prayer.*

L. *What are the words of that Canon?*

M. ["No Minister or Ministers shall without "License and Direction of the Bishop of the Dioceſs first obtain- "ed and had under his Hand and Seal, appoint or keep any Solemn "Fasts, either publickly or in private Houses, other than such as "by Law are, or by Publick Authority shall be appointed; Nor "shall be wittingly present at any of them, under pain of Suspensi- "on for the first Fault, of Excommunication for the second, and "of Deposition from the Ministry for the third. Neither shall any "Minister (not Licensed as is aforesaid) *presume* to appoint or hold "any Meetings for Sermons, *&c.* --- nor attempt by Fasting and "Prayer to cast out any Devil, *&c.*

L. *All this was done to prevent Abuses.*

M. It fell out well that they did not forbid Christianity or reading Scripture in a known Tongue, to prevent abusing it? And next, that they forbad not Law and the use of Reason, which is most of all abused.

But do not you think that they make very unworthy Men Ministers, or that they change or maim the Pastoral Office, when no Minister, no not the wisest may be trusted to fast and pray with his Neighbours? Should a Master of a Family be forbidden this in his House? the *Jews* forbad it not to *Cornelius.* What jealousies have such a Clergy of one another? And of Preaching, Fasting and Praying? What if some Neighbours have some great Temptations, some great Guilt, some great Danger, by a Plague, or the like, or some great Affliction (some Friends near Death) or some important Business of great moment, (as Marriage, Travel, Navigation, *&c.*) Must the Bishop know all their secrets

that

that their Pastor at home must know? Or is he a capable Judge for many Hundred Parishes when they must Fast or Pray? Or did you ever know any go to him for such a License? Are not those unworthy Ministers that be not fit to be trusted to Fast and Pray with their People, while the Law is open to punish all abuses of it? And are not those over-subject to Prelacy that will Swear Obedience in this, any more than against Preaching the Gospel? *Dan. 6. 5. We shall not find any occasion against this* Daniel, *except we find it concerning the Law of his God.*

Chap. XXXVI. Point XXXIII. *Of the Excommunication of the three last Canons.*

M. THe quality of the rest of the Canons resolve me, that it is unlawful for me, if commanded, to publish an Excommunication against any upon the three last.

L. *What be the three last?*

M. The 139th is ["Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the "Sacred Synod of this Nation in the Name of Christ, and by the "King's Authority assembled, is not the true Church of *England* "by Representation, let him be Excommunicate, and not re- "stored till he repent and publickly revoke this his wicked Er- "ror.

L. *What fault can you find with this?*

M. 1. No man can tell what is the Church representative, till they know which is the Church real. And this they tell us not, either as to Matter or Form. 1. Whether the Church real be only the Clergy, or also the Laity? Whether the King and Parliament, Nobles, Gentry and Commons, be all Represented in the Convocation? If yea, by what Law or Power? And may we say that King and Parliament do what these do? What need they then after to confirm their Canons? And they that hold the Church Laws bind in Conscience as such before King and Parliament confirm them, will bring King and Parliament under their Obedience, if not Excommunication. But if they pretend not to represent the King and Laity, they falsly exclude them from being part of the Church.

2. They are utterly disagreed *de Forma* what the Church of *England* is: either it hath an Ecclesiastical constitutive Soveraign

Power, or not. If not, it is not an Ecclesiastick Body Politick. And of late their disputing Doctors, plainly confess that it hath no such specifying *Summa Potestas*, and so is formally no Political governed Church. The King's Government of it by the Sword, which none deny, they say, is but an *Accident* of it, and not Essential to the Church. And so in sum, it is but a meer Community, or a voluntary Confederacy of many Churches, that make no unifying Politie. And that is, to be a Church only in a loose and not proper sence, as the Assembly at *Nimegen* was a Kingdom.

3. I doubt not but Thousands of Lay-Men, and many Dissenting Ministers, are true Parts of the Church of *England*; And therefore that the Convocation represented one part, only of that Church.

4. If they be but a Community, they can make no Laws; but only Contracts: Laws are only the Acts and Instruments of Rulers. Therefore we owe no Obedience to them, as being no Commands of Rulers, till the Civil Power make them Laws: save as particular Pastors may make them Laws to their several Flocks.

5. If they make them obligatory Church-Laws as the Acts of the Convocation, then it seems the Representative Church governeth the Real; and the Presbyters in Convocation exercise a Legislative Power, which is the higheſt that Bishops can pretend to.

6. These being left thus in uncertainty in the dark, how comes that Man to deserve Excommunication, or be wickedly erroneous, that herein declareth his dissent. I dare not publish such an Excommunication if commanded.

L. *What is the* 140*th Canon.*

M. "Whosoever shall affirm, that no manner of Person, either "of the Clergy or Laity, not being then particularly assembled "in the said sacred Synod, are to be subject to the Decrees "thereof in Causes Ecclesiastical (made and ratifyed by the "King's Majestie's Supream Authority) as not having given "their Voice to them, Let him be Excommunicated, and not re-"stored, *&c.*

Here craftily in a Parenthesis, they put in the King's Authority, and if they mean only his Obligation on us, no one of us denieth it: But because their disputing Doctors take that but as

an

an Accident, we may say, that the Papists themselves are oft put to say, that General Councils bind not the absent, till they receive them; And the *French* long received not the Council of *Trent*, nor many Churches other Councils.

L. *What is the last Canon.*

M. The 141st (for so many Church-Commandments we have, God's Ten being but a little part of our Religion) is, "Whoever shall affirm that the Sacred Synod assembled as "aforesaid, was a Company of such Persons as did conspire "together against Godly and Religious Professors of the Gospel, "and that therefore both they and their Proceedings in ma-"king Canons and Constitutions in Causes Ecclesiastical by the "King's Authority----Let them be Excommunicated and not re-"stored, *&c.*

Here again we doubt not of the King's obligatory Power: But what the Persons and their Works were, I think a Point that Christians may differ about, and not deserve Excommunication. It seems they could foresee what Men would judge of them: and no wonder, tho' they had not the Gift of Prophecy. I am none of their Judge, but leave God's Work to himself: But I must say, that this Book of Canons doth no whit increase my esteem of Council, of Prelacy, of Humane Canons or Clergies Laws, nor of the particular Bishops and Clergy that made them. And that I will neither publish such Excommunications, nor promise to swear to do it: Tho' I know that stretching pretences satisfie some Men; like theirs that own the name of *Sacred* to that Synod, because *Sacrum quod sanctum, simul execrabile signat*, A professed and relative Sanctity may be granted them.

Chap. XXXVII. Point XXXIV. *Of renouncing all Obligations from the Covenant, as on me or any other, to endeavour any alteration of Church Government.*

L. *This is now ceased at the end of twenty years; what need you mention this?*

M. 1. I thought you had desired to know why we conformed not for the twenty years past. 2. I suppose that the like is still imposed on others, in the Corporation Act, the Vestry Act, the Militia

Militia Act, and the Marrow of it still imposed on us in the *Oxford* Oath,

L. *And what you have against it?*

M. First I'll tell you what we have not against it, because we are commonly here falsly accused.

1. It is none of our Controversy whether this Oath or Covenant was unlawfully made and imposed both on the people and the King; we deny none of this.

2. It is none of our Controversy, whether there be not some part of the Matter of it that is unlawful: We deny not that.

3. It is none of our Controversy, whether it was not unlawfully taken: We justifie not that as to our selves, tho' we are not judges of the sin of King and Lords, and others whom we have no Calling to condemn.

4. It is none of our Controversy, whether this, or any other Covenant or Vow do bind us to Rebellion, Sedition, or any unlawful Act; we renounce all such Obligation.

5. Yea, we hold that neither this, nor any other Vows of our own, can prevent any Obligation that the King hath Authority to impose upon us, in things great or small; else men might disable Magistrates to rule them, and exempt themselves from Obedience by Vowing before hand not to obey.

6. I add for my self, that I hold my self bound by this Covenant to nothing, which I had not been bound to if I had never taken it. For I never thought that by Vows we may make new Religions or Laws to our selves, but only bind our selves to that which God doth make our Duty.

L. *Where then is the danger or sin that you fear?*

M. I. As to the Obligation of the Vow on my self.

II. As to the Obligation of it on all others.

III. As to the matter of altering Church Government.

1. I am neither so blind, wicked or singular, as to deny the common Doctrine of Casuists, Protestants and Papists; that tho' a Vow be both sinfully imposed, and sinfully taken, yet it bindeth *in materia necessaria & licita:* Yea, that if part of the matter be unlawful, yet it bindeth to that part which is lawful. Else a Knave might exempt himself from the performance of all his Vows, by foisting in some unlawful matter, or by making them in an unlawful manner.

Therefore

Therefore if there be any thing that is neceſſary or lawful in that Vow, I believe that I am thereto bound.

L. *So Rebels that think it lawful to rebel, will ſay that the Covenant binds them to it.*

M. So he that thinks Gods Law doth bind him to Murder or Rebellion, will plead Gods Law for it: But doth it follow that Gods Law bindeth him to that or to nothing?

It is not mens falſe ſayings that make or prove ſuch Obligation? He that will ſay that Gods Laws, or the Kings, or the Covenant, binds him to ſin, muſt be puniſhed for his Sin and Lie, and yet all juſt Obligations ſtand.

L. *But you are bound before by other Obligations to all that is good in it, and not by the Covenant?*

M. That's an inference contrary to Reaſon and Chriſtianity; Can a Man of any Reaſon once dream that a Man may not have many Obligations to one and the ſame Duty? or that the ſecond Oath binds not to it becauſe the firſt did? you vowed your ſelf to Chriſt in Baptiſm, and you renew the ſame in the Lords Supper: Are all the latter null, becauſe the firſt is valid? What if you many times Swear Allegiance to the King? Do none of theſe bind you but the firſt?

L. II. *But do you think that endeavours to alter Church Government is any of your lawful or neceſſary Matter?*

M. You know that there is a Law that maketh it a *Præmunire* penalty to ſay that the Covenant bindeth one to endeavour any alteration of Church Government: And why then will you put ſuch a queſtion to me? All that I will ſay is this, that as I ſay not that any one is bound to it by this Covenant; ſo I am not ſo good a Caſuiſt as to be able to juſtifie and acquit all other men from all ſuch Obligations. Let them look to themſelves, for my part I will be no voucher or ſurety for their indemnity,

L. III. *This brings up to the other part of your Reaſons: and why may you not ſay that none is ſo bound?*

M. 1. Becauſe God never made me a Caſuiſt to determine the caſe for all men in three Kingdoms.

2. Becauſe it is a new and monſtrous thing for one private man (yea many thouſand private men) to be forced to ſuch an Office and Undertaking: Every man muſt anſwer for himſelf before God and Man: *Noxa caput ſequitur.* If I were commanded to be ſurety for every man in *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, but for the

the Peace or good Behaviour, I ſhould think it a piece of as palpable injuſtice as moſt ever the World knew. But if I muſt undertake to anſwer for all their Souls, in a caſe where thouſands of Learned men have been of the contrary mind, I'll firſt think how to anſwer for my own.

Yet as to that part which I am certain of my ſelf, I do not ſcruple it. I dare ſubſcribe that the Covenant bindeth no man to be Falſe or Rebellious againſt the King, or to endeavour to alter our Monarchy, or to deprive the King of any of his Rights; nor to endeavour to change any part of Church Government which Chriſt hath inſtituted for continuance in his Church. And is not this enough?

But whether our Dioceſan frame, as diſtinct from that which Arch-biſhop *Uſher* called the Primitive Government, be changeable; or whether none of their Courts, and Lay-mens power of the Keys be changeable, or ought to be changed? And whether no man may endeavour it in his place and calling? I think a man may be ſaved without knowing. And I think, if you ask a man, if King and Parliament ſhould change the Office of an Official, a Commiſſary, a Chancellor, *&c.* or ſhould ſet up a Biſhop in every Market Town, is it a ſin againſt God? or is it unlawful to obey them? or if it be lawful to do it, and any of them Swear to endeavour it in his place, is he bound to perform that Oath? If to all this a man ſay, *I cannot tell, I am not Learned enough in Law and Divinity to reſolve ſuch caſes; but I am reſolved my ſelf to live in Loyalty and Peace.* I would ask any man that hath not put off humanity, whether that man be fit to determine the caſe for all other men in three Kingdoms, and to be a voucher for all their Souls in a caſe that he underſtandeth not himſelf.

L. *How doth this make you a Voucher for their Souls?*

M. 1. The caſe is of exceeding weight: If I ſhould publickly declare that no man is thus bound by a Vow, and I ſhould prove miſtaken. 1. Then I become guilty of all theſe mens ſin by juſtifying it as no ſin. 2. And I am guilty of cruelty to their Souls in open telling them that they need not perform their Vows, nor repent of non-performance. 3. And Perjury is one of the heinouſeſt ſins on Earth. 4. And the Perjury of Millions or Nations is yet one of the grievouſeſt degrees of guilt, 5. And I do my worſt to make God deſtroy or forſake ſuch a Land. And what yet can I do worſe? I ſay, if in juſtifying them I ſhould be miſtaken,

miſtaken, what a guilt ſhould I incur? And doth Nature or Scripture bind me to run ſo great a hazard for ſo many thouſand others.

Beſides, he that will be a Caſuiſt muſt know all the caſe: there are hundreds and thouſands put upon theſe deciſions, that being then Children, knew not who made the Covenant; nor how it was impoſed or taken, and many that know not what it is, and never ſaw it.

And there are thouſands, if not millions, that took it, whoſe Faces I never ſaw, and know not what moved them, nor in what ſence they took it; and Caſuiſts ſay, that if a man miſtake the Impoſers ſence, he is bound to keep it in the ſence that he underſtood it when he took it, if a lawful one; eſpecially if the Impoſers had no Authority, or their ſence was doubtful.

And is it not uncharitable for me to think that none of the King's Compounding Lords or Clergy that after took it, did take it in a ſence which they thought ſound? And muſt I tell them all that none of them is bound to keep it in that ſound ſence?

I will not run the danger of having thouſands in judgment to ſuffer for Perjury, and ſaying, This man declared that it was no ſin. If they are all Innocent, what need they my juſtification, when they ſtand or fall by the judgment of God. If they prove guilty, my declaring it no ſin, will not acquit them, but condemn my own Soul by tempting them to impenitence. I do not ſay that they are obliged by this Vow herein, nor I will not ſay they are not. There are many matters firſt to be known, if we agree in point of Doctrine; and I know that it's an eaſie thing for confident men to multiply words to prove all lawful in this Oath, and to Swear that it is rebellious Hearts that cauſe our doubtings: (and ſo ſay the Papiſts of the Proteſtants) But whatever they ſay or threat, I will not by their confidence and talk be drawn to caſt my Soul into ſo great a hazard. All men are not ſo bold in ſuch things as ſome.

Chap. XXXVIII. Point XXXV. *Of the* Oxford *Oath, that we will never endeavour any alteration of Church Government.*

M. THE *Oxford* Act is not content that we say that we are not bound by the Covenant to endeavour any alteration of Church Government, but we must say and Swear that we never will endeavour it, as any other way obliged to it.

L. *The meaning is, that you will never endeavour it by Rebellion, Sedition, or unlawful means.*

M. The Parliament knew how to speak their minds. By such Expositions you may Swear almost any thing in the World, and no Government shall have any security by your Oaths: The words are contrivedly as universal against all endeavour as can be spoken.

2. But I'll presently confute you undeniably.

You know *Church and State* Government are conjoined in the Oath, and the Church put first. Will you say as to *State Government*, that the meaning only is, That *I will not endeavour to depose the King, or alter Monarchy by Rebellion, or any unlawful means*, but only by lawful means; if you do, you'l soon be told home, that the Oath doth mean, That *no means* is *lawful* to *such an end*, but the *work it self* as well as the *means* is *forsworn.*

L. *But the meaning is only, that you will not endeavour to alter* Episcopacy, *and not all other Offices and Courts.*

M. This is as palpable a falsification as the former: For 1. The words are a most express abjuration of *endeavouring any alteration of Government* at all. And if you take the word [*Alteration*] strictly, it more commonly signifieth a change of *Quality* or *Manner*, than of *Essence.* But if you take it largely, it comprehendeth both.

2. And I appeal to any mans Conscience whether that was, or is the Bishops sence: Go ask them, My Lords, "If I endeavour but "to reduce Dioceſans to every Corporation, and to take down your "Lordships, and great Revenues, and your Chancellors Courts, "and all the rest of your Humane Officers, will you take it for "no breach of my Oath? and I warrant you they will soon re-"solve you.

3. Yet

3. Yet I ſhall fullier convince you : The Biſhops and Parliament are of the mind of the Church of *England :* And the Canons do moſt fully ſpeak the Churches mind. And the Seventh Canon before cited, when it makes it *ipſo facto* Excommunication to call the Church Government ſinful, tells you, that they extend this to [*Arch-biſhops, Biſhops, Deans, Arch-deacons, and the reſt that bear Office therein.*

4. And I believe if you ſhould ſay that I take my Oath to bind me from endeavouring no change of the Government of the State, but only of the *Eſſence of Monarchy*, you would quickly feel the Error of your Expoſition.

L. *But I can aſſure you, that many able Conforming Miniſters take the Declaration in the Act of Uniformity, in ſuch ſences as aforeſaid.*

M. Our King is King of *Scotland* as well as of *England*, and he hath thus declared his ſence in the caſe of the Earl of *Argyle*, and the Reaſons of it are conſiderable. And do you think that it can be the true ſence in *England*, and deſerve preferment as to Loyal and Obedient Miniſters, which deſerveth Death it ſelf in *Scotland?* can you wiſh for a clearer Expoſition?

L. *And why will you not Swear never to endeavour any alteration, if you be required ſo to do?*

M. I have read Dr. *Stillingfleet*'s *Irenicon*, and many ſuch Books, in which I ſee how great a number of our greateſt Divines, as well as Arch-biſhop *Cranmer*, took the Form of Church Government to be alterable, and not fixed by Chriſt: And if the Doctor have changed his judgment, that changeth not the Authority of thoſe that he citeth.

2. I have in my full Treatiſe of Epiſcopacy told you why I cannot but wiſh more than one thing in our Eccleſiaſtical Courts and Government changed.

3. I take it for a matter that deſerveth conſideration, whether it be no change of the *State* Government, to make all the Church Government unchangeable, and ſo to diſable the King to change it: And how to reconcile the two parts of the Oath: And whether if the whole Church Government as fixed, muſt thus be Sworn to as Monarchy is, it alter not our Conſtitution: Or at leaſt be not a perillous Innovation.

4. If the King and Parliament ſhould command Men to endeavour an Alteration, *e. g.* of Lay-Mens Power of the Keys, or the greatneſs of Dioceſes, I am afraid of being ſworn beforehand to diſobey them.

L. *But the Parliament meant not to bind themſelves herein.*

M. I grant it. (Tho' being Church of *England* men, the 7th Canon aforeſaid maketh it doubtful) But when they have bound all the Subjects in the Land, and themſelves among others, when out of Parliament, and when it's *Excommunication* to charge any of the Church-Offices with Sin; I think the Church Government is fixed as unalterable. I ask you, Did the Parliament bind themſelves againſt altering Monarchy, or the Succeſſion? If they did, then it ſeems they did ſo by Church-Government, when they put it in many Oaths before that of the State. If they did not, then they have fixed Monarchy no more than Church-Government by this Oath. Therefore when they bind all in the ſame Oath from endeavouring any Alteration of Church-Government, they ſhew that they intend the fixing of it. And tho' ſome think it leaveth room for Petitioning, I do not believe that the Law or Oath leave any Men at Liberty to Petition againſt Monarchy; which is here conjoyned.

But my great reaſon of Non-Conformity herein yet remaineth. If the faults of Church-Government ſhould prove but the tenth part as great as is feared by many, and ſaid by thoſe that write about it, what a tremendous thing is it to make a deliberate Solemn Covenant and Oath, never to endeavour any amendment of it, nor to perſwade any man to repent or amend.

If the *Germans*, who are reported to be addicted to Drunkenneſs, or other Nations to Whoredom or Thievery, ſhould take an Oath that they will never repent or amend, nor perſwade any other to it, what a caſe were this?

L. *I confeſs if the Corruptions of Church-Government ſhould prove as great Evils, as ſome conceive, it would be a heinous Sin indeed to Swear never to repent, or to endeavour to amend it.*

The old Nonconformists thought that the frame of * *English* Prelatical Government was far worse than all their Ceremonies and other Corruptions set together. They thought it a Platform fitted to exalt Pride and Covetousness, and to propagate all ungodliness, and to drive serious Piety and Conscience out of the Land, upon the accounts before-mentioned. 1. By the largeness of Dioceses making Discipline impossible, and so keeping almost all the wicked in the bosom of the Church, secure from the Power of the Keys. 2. By putting down all Bishops that should be in all the large Dioceses, save that one, and restraining all the Parish-Ministers from the true use of the Keys, unless they will be ruin'd by it. 3. By setting up Secular Courts under the name of Ecclesiastick, and making it their Employment by 141 Canons, which are their self-made Contrivances, to hinder and ruine laborious Preachers, and Men of tender Consciences, and to cherish the contrary sort. 4. By putting the decretive Power of the Keys into the Power of these Lay-men. 5. By setting up Pastors over all the Land without the consent of the Flock, by the meer Will and Election of Great Men and Patrons. 6. By driving unfit and unwilling persons to eat and drink Damnation in the Sacrament. 7. By driving multitudes of good People from the needful means of their Salvation. 8. By bringing good Men that grieve for all this, into Odium, for being against it.

* *And* Bucer *thought so too, when he so earnestly wrote for another sort of Discipline to King* Edw. 6.

And if this prove the case, I had rather lie in Gaol till Death, than Swear or Promise never to endeavour that I or any should repent and amend it. Do you think it not contrary to our Baptismal Vow, in which we promise Obedience to Christ to our lives end?

I read that the *Israelites* were greatly reproved for Worship in the *High Places*, and that they seldom repented: But I read not that ever they took an Oath or Covenant never to endeavour to amend: I find that when *Israel* was made to Sin by the Calves of *Dan* and *Bethel*, that they went on and amended not: But I read not that they Covenanted or Sware never to amend. I find that the Pharisees were heinous Sinners, that by their Traditions made void the Law of God: But many of them came to *John*'s Baptism, and professed some Repentance; and

tho'

tho' obſtinacy cut off the Nation of the *Jews*, I read not that they drew the Nation into an Oath or Covenant never to amend. When Chriſt came to ſave the World, it was by a Covenant of Faith and Repentance. And if I ſhould ſee the World once confederate in a Covenant never to believe, repent and amend, I ſhould call it the *Kingdom of Satan*, and thence date our Accounts Chronological, with a *Regnante Diabolo*, as in *France* they did a while, with a *Regnante Chriſto*. (Of which *Vide Blondellum*).

I do not ſay that theſe old Nonconformiſts were in the right, nor that *Bucer* did no whit over-value the Diſcipline which he propoſed to King *Edward* the Sixth; nor that this Oath containeth all the foreſaid guilt. But I ſay, If it ſhould prove ſo, and venture on it in uncertainty, when the Judgment of ſo many Parliaments, Lawyers, Divines abroad and at home are againſt ſuch kind of Swearing: what a caſe ſhould I bring my Soul into? National Oaths, eſpecially ſuch as ſeem to me to fix every Church-Office, from the Arch-Biſhop to the Official, if not the Apparitor, as unalterable in the very Conſtitution of the Kingdom, even putting them before the State, are Matters of greater Conſequence than to be raſhly ventured on by me: Even the Long Parliament that made the ſilencing Acts, reſtored not the Canon and *Et cætera* Oath of 1640. which bound Men never to conſent to ſuch Alteration of Church-Government, by Arch-Biſhops, Biſhops, Deans and Chapters, Arch-deacons, *&c.*

Chap. XXXIX. Point XXXVI. *Of Subſcribing and Swearing againſt the Poſition as Traiterous, of taking Arms by the King's Authority againſt thoſe that are Commiſſioned by him in Purſuance of ſuch Commiſſion.*

L. I *Am ſure you can have nothing againſt this, unleſs by forced Expoſition of the words.*

M. I am ſure that I abhor all forced Expoſitions, and all Treaſon, Rebellion and Sedition. But here, becauſe you are a Lawyer, I will come to you only as a Client or Learner, intreating you to reſolve all the common Objections, that I may do what I do in Truth, Judgment and Righteouſneſs.

L. *I*

L. *I doubt not but I shall easily resolve them all.*

M. 1. Do you not believe that the first Clause, that it is unlawful to take Arms against the King upon any *pretence whatsoever*, doth extend also to this taking Arms against any Commission'd by him *on any pretence* whatsoever?

L. *No doubt of it: For this of not taking Arms against those Commission'd by him, is but Expository of the former, not taking Arms against the King. Else Men that fight against his Army may say, they fight not against the King. And can the King make War without an Army?*

M. I believe you are in the right. 2. I ask you, what is meant by the King's Authority? Is it not by his Laws that are the highest Acts of his Authority?

L. *There is no doubt, but what's done by Law, is done by the King's Authority.*

M. 3. How are we to know the King's Commission?

L. *By his Seal.*

M. I never heard of many of the Parliaments Army that ever saw any sealed Commission of those they fought against: and would that excuse them?

L. *No, because it was notorious that the King owned the War.*

M. But suppose that any of his Souldiers came to take free Quarter, or Horses, or Plunder, or to possess any Man's House or Lands, how shall we know that they had Commission for these? And may they be resisted till they shew their Commissions?

L. *No; because it will hinder the King's Service.*

M. 4. What Seal must it be that must make a Commission?

L. *Either the Great or Little Seal.*

M. 5. Is it possible for the Law and a Commission to be contrary?

L. *Some say No, because it is no Commission, if it be contrary to the Law. And some say No, because it must be supposed that the King will grant no Commission contrary to Law. And some say* Yea; *But when they are contrary, the Commission is to be obeyed against the Law. And some say Yea; And that the Law is to be obeyed against the Commission.*

M. But if you are of so many Minds, how are Doubters resolved, what to Swear and what to do?

1. If you say, It's no Commission that is contrary to Law, who shall be Judge when it is contrary to Law? If every Subject be Judge, it is as easie to Rebel, and say the King's Commission is illegal, as it is to deny all the Authority of his Commissions?

L. *The Judges and Courts must judge what is Legal.*

M. If the Judges, yea, or the Parliament shall judge the King's Commissions illegal, will that make it lawful for the Subjects to resist them?

L. *I dare not say so. Therefore we must come to the later Opinion, that the King himself is Judge, and that it is Legal* eo nomine, *because it is his Commission, and that Commissions suspend all contrary Laws. Tho' I know many abhor this, that would not have the King's Will to be above all Laws, and Rule to be Arbitrary.*

M. But suppose it be so, the Subjects know the *Laws* to be the King's by Promulgation: How shall they be sure that *Commissions* are not counterfeit if they be contrary to them? Must every Fellow be believed that produceth a Commission? may it not be counterfeited?

L. *The King's Officers that keep his Seals must be trusted by us, seeing the King trusteth them.*

M. 1. Then the King's *Officers* are set above all Laws and Judicatures, as well as the King. 2. And why then are Judges Sworn not to be moved from Justice by the Great or Little Seal? 3. But must we trust every Man that shews a Seal, that he did not counterfeit it?

L. *I confess that the Laws are most Publick and certain Notifications of the King's Will. But it's easie to raise more Doubts than the wisest man can answer.*

M. Is it not possible for two *Commissions* to be contrary? what if one Man have a Patent for Life to be Lord Admiral, or Lieutenant of the *Tower*, or the like, and another come with a Commission to put him out and take Possession; which must be obeyed?

L. *He that hath the last Commission. The former may not resist him: For the later nullifieth the former.*

M. Is it not then in the Power of the Keeper of the Seals to depose the King at his pleasure, by sealing new Commissions to Conspirators to seize on his Garisons, Guards, Treasure, Magazines, Forts and Navy?

L. *I*

L. *It must be taken for granted that the King will give no Commission against himself.*

M. But his former Officers are not himself, and if they must resign to new Commissioners, how know they but it is the King's Will?

L. *I tell you we must trust those that the King trusteth.*

M. Then the question is, whether it shall be in the Power of a Lord Keeper to depose the King, or betray the Kingdom to whom he will, because the King trusteth him with the Seal; Or in the Power of a Parliament to judge whether a Commission be Legal, or whether Laws or Commissions be of greater Authority.

L. *There is no end of answering absurd Suppositions: It is not to be supposed that the King will do wrong, or so far trust untrusty Men.*

M. 1. We must suppose that a Parliament may do wrong. 2. *Izaakson* and other Historians say, That King *John* made over his Kingdom to the Pope, and offered it to the Mahometan King of *Morocco*, to help him against his Lords. 3. Is it not possible that a Queen *Mary*, or a *Charles* the Ninth of *France* might do what they did? 4. Have not many Kings been ruined by trusting Traitors? Did the King of *Portugal*'s Brother and Lords answer the trust reposed in them, when they Deposed and imprisoned him? Is not History full of such Examples? Who deposed the Emperor *Ludovicus Pius*, but his trusted Clergy and Servants? Who deposed the Emperor *Henry* 4. but his own Son? and his Clergy and Lords? Abundance of the *Greek* Emperors were so used, and some *English* and *Scottish* Kings.

The Story of the King of Cappadocia *and his Brother, that conspired with some Nobles to depose him, and take his Kingdom, and how the Senate of* Rome *detected the Plot, and defeated it by the help of* Cicero, *then Proconsul there, is worth the reading in* Cicero's *Epistles.*

L. *Some body must be trusted; and if they be Traitors, who can help it?*

M. But shall all entrusted Lord-Keepers or Lord Privy-Seals be so far encouraged to Treason, as to tell them, If you will depose the King, who can help it? We are all Sworn not to resist you?] How stands this with our Oath of Allegiance to the King?

And is not the King's life and welfare the interest of the Kingdom? and is he not an Enemy to the Kingdom who destroyeth

the King? And do you think that one Lord-keeper is fitter to be trusted with the Safety of the Kingdom, than a Parliament and all the Courts of Justice? When was there a Lord-Chancellor more Trusted and Honoured than Sir *Edward Hyde* Earl of *Clarendon*, who had long been faithful to the King? And yet neither King nor Parliament thought that he was more to be trusted with the Safety of the King and Kingdom, than the Parliament was: Else they had not Banished him.

L. *A Fool may ask more Questions, than a Wise man can answer; and find Knots that no one can untye.*

M. And are all we Fools that never studied the Law, fit to Answer all those Questions by an Oath, which you that are a Lawyer cannot Answer by Discourse? will you become abler to Answer them, when we have Sworn them? If you were at a loss about a Law Case in *Westminster-Hall*, would you set all the Country and City Housholders that are Ignorant, to decide it by Swearing which side is right? were it not wiser to cast lots to determine it? And have those Men Humanity and Conscience, and do they believe there is a God, that will swear that of such Law Cases, which Lawyers profess to be too hard for them, and which they are disagreed in as a common Controversie in all Lands?

And I pray you, why are Nations so sollicitous to have Laws for their Security, if a Chancellor be above them all, and by a Commission may cast them off at his pleasure?

L. *We do not say the Chancellor may do it, but the King.*

M. Doth not the Chancellor keep the Seal? and must we not take them for the Kings Commissions which he sealeth?

L. *If you know that the Commission be notoriously against Law, you may suspect that the King consenteth not, and may stay till you enquire of him whether it be his Act and Will.*

M. But 1. If one come with a Commission to take possession of the King's Treasure, Magazines, Garisons, Navy, *&c.* and attempt it by force, may he be resisted by force till the King's Mind be enquired of? If not, he may depose the King and seize his Strengths before we can come to enquire of the King. All have not access to the King. If it were the Garison of *New-Castle*, *Berwick*, *Carlisle*, &c. it will be too late to send to the King. But if such Commissioners may so long be resisted, then how can we Swear that *upon no pretence whatsoever* his Commissioners may be resisted by his own Authority? 2. And

2. And if a Highway-man shew a Commission to take my Purse, he will not stay till I know whether the King consent to his Commission.

L. *You stretch the sence of the Subscription and Oath further than the Parliament intended it. Do you think that if half a Dozen or more* Irishmen *had come into the Parliament House, and shewed a Commission Real or Counterfeit to kill them all, Lords and Commons, that they would not have defended their Lives with their Swords? And do you think then that ever they meant to bind all the Subjects against that which they would do themselves.*

M. And do you think that we should all Swear to that which they never meant to bind us to? Is there any limitation in the words? Or can any words be devised more to exclude exceptions than [*not on any pretence whatsoever.*] But *self* is near men, and is not so concerned in other mens cases as their own. For my part, I believe that they meant plainly and universally as they speak, tho' they might forget their own case: My proof is from the express words of the Militia Act, where they determine that neither the *whole Parliament* or part, hath any Power of *offensive* or *defensive Arms* against the King's Commissioners: Much less have any single Persons.

L. *Do you think that ever they intended to destroy all mens Property, and defence of Life or Goods, and to repeal all the Laws that bind Sheriffs by the* Posse Comitatus *to suppress Riots, and to execute the decrees of the Courts of Justice for Possessions or Dis-possessions, tho' any should shew Commissions to the contrary, and to overthrow the Judges Oaths?*

M. I can no way judge what they meant, but by what they did. I find they have *absolutely denied* all *right* of *defensive Arms* in the Subject or Parliament, and that's all that I speak of: From whence I must needs suppose, that their sence was, that all men have Propriety in Estates, Wives, Children and Lives, and that the King ought to Govern them by Law, and wrong no Man, and that Judges ought to do right by Sentence, tho' the King forbid them. And that Sheriffs and Justices must ordinarily execute the Law: But if the King by force restrain them, or give Commission to any Subject by force to violate any Law or Sentence, or to take away any Mens Lives or Estates, it is not lawful by defensive Arms, for any Sheriff, Justices, or any others to resist. This is plainly the sence of the Militia Act, and of our Oaths.

L. *I pray you let us end this tender Controversy.*

M. I have yet a few more doubts to be resolved.

Politicks being the Foundation of *Juris-prudentia*, I doubt not but you have studied Politicks: I pray you tell me why all Politicks placing a Republick in the predicament of Relation, do make the *bonum publicum* to be its essential *terminus* in the definition.

L. *Because it is so indeed; it being no* Civitas *or* Respublica *that is not for the* Common good; *and therefore they make it the difference between a King and a Tyrant, that a King ruleth for the* Common good, *and a Tyrant for his private Ends and Interests.*

M. But by your leave I think that distinction ill and dangerously uttered: For every man hath some culpable selfishness; and also the Kings Self-interest is Lawfully intended: For Commonwealths called Kingdoms being at first constituted by Contract, no doubt there was necessary the Consent of both the contracting Parties: None can be King against his Will. And do you think any Man would take a Crown only for the good of others, without security for his own just Interest, Honour and Prerogative, without which he cannot well Govern? Therefore I think that those Politicks too loosly describe Tyranny, by *self-interest*, and can prove no man a proper Tyrant in *Exercitio* (distinct from an Usurper) but him that seeks the *destruction* of the *Commonwealth*, whose good he is bound to preserve.

But I further ask you,

Do you think the Law of Man, or a Commission can abrogate the Law of Nature?

L. *No Man ever affirmed it: For the Law of Nature is Gods Law; yea his first and most Fundamental Law.*

M. I will not deny it as to the stable Laws of Nature, tho' I think that Nature it self hath some mutable Laws, where the *Nature* of the matter is mutable. But then I would further know, whether to defend the Life of your self, Wife or Children against injurious Assaults be any part of the Law of Nature.

L. *Experience resolveth that; what Man will not defend his Life that can? yea what Beast, or Bird, even the most harmless will not use such weapons as Nature hath given them, Horns, Feet, Teeth,* &c.

M. But

M. But Man hath Reason to rule natural inclinations: And sure a Malefactor if he could, should not defend his Life against Justice, I think not so much as by running away: Nor many single innocent Persons defend their Lives by a Publick War, because a War is more hurtful to the Commonwealth than his death is: And the Common good is better than a single Persons, or a fews, and to be prefer'd.

But I next ask, whether the *Body of a Kingdom have by Gods Law of Nature a self-defending power against its notorious assaulting Foes?*

L. *Do you think any man doubts of that? May not the King and Kingdom defend themselves against Invaders? If one man may defend his Purse or Life against another, a King and Kingdom is more worth than one man: You can hardly name one principle in the Law of Nature more undoubted, than that Kingdoms have a right to defend themselves if they can.*

M. And may they not defend themselves, against Usurpers and Rebels, and Traytors at home, as well as against Foreign Foes?

L. *To deny that is Treason: How else should we defend the King? Was not* Jack Straw, *and many a Rebellion lawfully resisted? and did not the Lord Mayor of* London *Lawfully kill* Wat. Tyler? *and so of any other in his case?*

M. But what if the *Irish* took on them to rise by the Kings Commission, and shew'd a Counterfeit of it, was it lawful for the Protestants to have resisted them to save their Lives and Cities?

L. *They should have sent to the King to know whether that Commission was Counterfeit or not.*

M. But before they could do that, *Dublin* had been lost, and all their Lives and Estates: And the two hundred thousand that were Murdered were not restored to Life again, when it was notified that they belied the King, and that they had not his Commission.

L. *It was notorious by the nature of the case that they belied the King, and had none of his Commission, because it was so greatly against his own Interest.*

M. Will you allow any Countrey to resist an Army that shew the Kings Commission, if they are confident, or can prove that it is *against his Interest?*

L. *He*

L. *He is the Judge of his own Intereſt, when the Caſe cometh before him: Till then a doubtful, or at leaſt a certain Commiſſion may not be reſiſted: You would entangle the Caſe with difficulties that ſeldom fall out; but are you againſt reſiſting* all known Commiſſions?

M. You know that the Oaths and Subſcriptions extend to all caſes, and *againſt any pretence whatſoever*, not excepting rare Caſes: What I am for or againſt I'll tell you more anon. But I ask further, tho' I am bound by the Fifth Commandment to believe that the *Iriſh* belied the King, and that the *Scots* belied him, who in their Book called *Truths Manifeſt*, affirm, that *He Commiſſioned the* Iriſh *by the* Scots *broad Seal, which was then in his poſſeſſion in* Scotland; do you think if the *Scots* could have proved what they affirm, that it had been lawful to have reſiſted the *Iriſh*, and defended the Proteſtant Lives and Cities in *Ireland?*

L. *I will not anſwer ſuch dangerous queſtions.*

M. But muſt all ignorant men then Subſcribe and Swear to what you cannot, or dare not anſwer.

But I further ask you, about not reſiſting Commiſſions on any pretence whatſoever; what was the ſence of the old Greek Philoſophers and Orators in that caſe?

L. *You know they were almoſt all bred up in Ariſtocratical or Democratical Republicks; and therefore no wonder if they are againſt us in this and more.*

M. What was the ſence of the old *Roman* Orators, Philoſophers and Hiſtorians as to this point?

L. *They alſo were hatcht under Popular Government, and tho' the later ſort magnifie ſuch excellent Monarchs as* Auguſtus, Veſpaſian, Titus, Adrian, Antoninus Pius *and* Anton. Philoſ. *and* Alexander Severus, *yet it is no wonder that they were too much for reſiſting and depoſing ſuch as oppreſt the Commonwealth.*

M. What was the ſence of the Ancient Biſhops and Clergy herein?

L. *They were long for patient ſuffering: But it is no wonder that when they grew worldly and ſtrong, they not only reſiſted; but depoſed Emperors and Princes.*

M. I pray which way go the Papiſt Caſuiſts in this caſe of reſiſtance?

L. *You cannot doubt of that when you know their Councels Laws*

for

for depoſing Kings on Excommunication. And what wonder when they go on that falſe Suppoſition, that the People give the Prince his Power for their own good, and may take it from him if he turn it againſt them to the hurt of the Common-wealth?

M. I pray what ſay *Politick* Writers, Papiſts and Proteſtants in this caſe; I mean the Eminent ones, ſuch as *Bodin, Althuſius, Arniſæus, Tholoſanus, Beſoldus, Choquierius, Menochius, Liebenthalius, Contzen, Koningh, Timplerus, Willius, Berekringer,* and ſuch others?

L. *They commonly run one way, founding Power in the People, as being the* Majeſtas Realis, *and giving the King's and States a derived* Majeſtatem Perſonalem, *which being for the Common good, they may reſiſt when it would deſtroy it. They took their Politicks by Learning from* Ariſtotle, Plato, Cicero, *and ſuch Ancients, and no wonder if they follow them.*

M. And I pray you which way go our famous *Hiſtorians* in this Point, ſuch as *Commines, Jovius, Guicciardine, Pontanus, Sleidan, Thuanus, Beſoldus, Johnſton, Fregius,* and our Engliſh *Matth. Paris, Henry Huntington, Mat. Weſtminſter, Malmsbury, Hoveden,* &c.

L. *You know they liv'd in times when Civil Wars were ſo frequent, and Princes ſo bad, and one pulling down another, that it's no wonder if they praiſe ſome reſiſters. But if you read thoſe of our Age that lived in quiet Times and under good Princes, ſuch as* Camden, Speed *and* Baker, *you will find no ſuch thing.*

M. I pray which way go the famous *Civilians* herein, ſuch as *Gothofred, Hottoman, Cujacius, Weſenbechius, Pacius, Duarenus,* and ſuch others?

L. *You know that the Civil Law is fetcht from the* Romans, *and it's no wonder if it run in their ſtrein.*

M. I pray which way go the *Canoniſts?*

L. *You know they are Papiſts, and ſet up the Pope's Laws above the King's: But our Engliſh Canons do not ſo.*

M. I pray which way go our late Proteſtant *Lawyers,* ſuch as *Cook,* and *Littleton,* and the like?

L. *They are all for Loyalty, and for the Preeminence of the Law; and yet for the King's Prerogative.*

M. I find ſome of the greateſt Lawyers, that have defended Monarchy, ſuch as *William Barclay* and *Grotius,* do name many Caſes, in which it is lawful to reſiſt: What think you of their Writings?

L. *I will be no judge of them.*

M. I pray what think you of those great *Prelatists* that write, as Bishop *Bilson*, and *Ri. Hooker*, and *Jer. Taylor* do, and that joined with *Abbot* and the Parliament against Dr. *Laud*, *Sibthorpe* and *Mainwaring*; Which of them think you was in the right?

L. *You put too many Questions. I will answer no more.*

M. And must we Ignorant Men swear that all these aforesaid were deceived, and knew less than we?

Verily Sir, It seems a bold Oath for so great a Number of unlearned Men as are put upon it, and for us that are unlearned in the English Laws.

L. *But I doubt all these hard Questions are but raised as dust to hide some Principles of Rebellion? What is your own judgment, and how will you give Security for your Loyalty?*

M. They that think my Oath Security, take me for so honest, as that I will not be Perjured. And if so, I have already taken the Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, and an Oath of *Fidelity*, as the King's Chaplain in Ordinary (tho' never called to exercise it.) And I have fully in a large Volume, called, *A second Plea for Peace*, declared my Political Principles, which after all thoughts I stand to; And no one hath given me a word of Exceptions against them to this day, after so many years, but some in meer Malice tell me of my Aphorisms, without taking notice of this.

I here repeat that I am ready to engage to the utmost, that I renounce all Rebellion, Treason and Sedition, and all Principles tending thereto; that I am for as much Power of Princes and Obedience of Subjects, as any Text of Scripture speaks for, or as is given or asserted by any General Council, or the Confession of any Christian Church that I have seen, except what is ascribed to the Pope and his Substitutes; And I hold it unlawful to take Arms at all against the King; that is, against either his Authority, Person, Rights or Prerogative; or against any lawfully Commissioned by him, yea, or unlawfully, except in such Cases as God's Law of Nature, or the King himself by Law or contrary Command shall bind Men to resist.

L. *And so you will suppose that God's Law of Nature bindeth you in some Cases to resist: And will not all Rebels plead that Law?*

M. Dare

M. Dare you say that there is no such Case? King *James* writeth that a King may not make War against his whole Kingdom? If Ten *Irishmen* pretend a Commission to Kill all the Parliament and Protestants in the Land, or to seize on the King's Garisons, or if King *John* give his Kingdom to the Pope, ask *Hooker*, *Bilson* or Parliaments, what the Law of Nature saith to these Cases.

Chap. XL. Point XXXVII. *Of Assenting and Consenting to the Damnatory Clauses of* Athanasius's *Creed.*

L. I *Hope you will not quarrel with the Creed.*

M. I take the Creed called *Athanasius*'s (tho' the Author is unknown) to be an excellent Explication of the Doctrine of the Trinity: And could wish that it were more used and learnt of all. But I am not so far to judge other Men, as to conclude all Men certainly damned for ever that are not so well skilled in that Mystery, as to believe every word there written.

L. *I have heard Learned Men say, That the* Assent *and* Consent *is not to be extended to the Damnatory Clauses, but only the Doctrinal Articles.*

M. They that can make *Laws* and *Oaths* speak or mean what they list, need not stick at any thing. Is not the Damnatory part a part of the Book of Common-Prayer, and contained in it?

L. *But they prove thus, that it meaneth no such Consent or Approbation. The Liturgy requireth you to read the* Apocrypha, *and yet not to believe all things in it to be true; For, say they, divers things in* Tobit *are evidently false: And so tho' it bind you to use and read* Athanasius's *Creed, it binds you not to believe all in it to be true.*

M. This Cheat is too gross to deceive a School-Boy with. Is *Athanasius*'s Creed a real part of the Common-Prayer Book, *contain'd in it*, or not?

L. *Yes, no doubt; we there find it both contained and prescribed* Verbatim.

M. Is the *Apocrypha* any part of the Common-Prayer Book, and contained in it, or not?

L. *If there be any Sentences out of it there inserted, those are part; else the* Apocrypha *is no part of the Book: It is only the* Order to read it *that is a* part.

M. Is not this a palpable Deceit, to argue that we are not bound to Assent and Consent to that which is contained in the Book, because we are not so bound to that which is not contained in it?

Chap. XLI. Point XXXVIII. *Of Saying Common-Prayer twice a day every day in the Year ordinarily.*

L. [*It is but that you shall every day say the Morning and Evening Service, not being let by Sickness, or ~~other~~ urgent Cause.*] *And what have you against this?*

M. I think when the Book was made, to help the ignorant Vulgar out of *Popery*, every day to use the Common-Prayer was a very good help to them. But the Case is much altered, and People now have more suitable Helps; and Ministers have so much other Work to do in their Studies, and with their Neighbours every day, and some Prayers to use more suitable to their Families and Closets, that it must needs be a sinful Impediment against other Duties, to say Common-Prayer twice a day. If they were commanded to *Preach* twice a day, every day in the year, it would cause a sinful Omission of other Duties, how good soever Preaching be in it self.

L. *But then you have* urgent Cause *of forbearance.*

M. We are not for abusive dallying with Covenants about Sacred things: It is evident by the instance of *Sickness*, that the Authors of the Imposition, meant only *extraordinary Causes* as urgent, and not that we should take our ordinary Work for such an urgent Cause. As if a Man that is bound to spend most of the day in his Shop shall Covenant to go Thirty Miles every day, if he be not let by urgent Cause.

L. *But you see that almost no Conformists do thus: therefore it's certain that they do not so understand it.*

M. That's a warning to take heed of promising that which we see so many that promised it not perform; They are our Monitors to take heed of such a playing with Sacred Covenants, and deceiving the Law, instead of obeying it.

Chap. XLII. Point XXXIX. *Of forcing the unwilling Parishioners to the Sacrament, and Accusing and Excommunicating the refusers.*

L. *How are you bound to this by Conformity?*

M. 1. We must assent and consent to the Rubrick, which commandeth [*That every Parishioner shall Communicate three times a year at least.* 2. The Oath of Canonical Obedience binds us to obey the 112 Canon, as well as the rest; which saith [*The Minister, Churchwardens, Questmen and Assistants of every Parish-Church and Chappel, shall yearly within* 40 *days after* Easter *exhibit to the Bishop or his Chancellor, the Names, and Surnames of All the Parishioners as well Men as Women, which being at the Age of* 16 *years, received not the Communion at* Easter *before.*] And then they are to be Excommunicated if they refuse, and to lie in Jail till they die, when taken by the Writ *De Excommunicato Capiendo.*

L. *And why should not men be forced to their Duty, and to their own good, if they are backward to it?*

M. The *internal* part is the *first* and chief part of their Duty, without which the *external* is not their Duty, but their great Sin. It is the Duty of Heathens to *Believe and be baptized*, but not to be baptized till they believe. It is the Duty of Candidates for the Ministry, to get *Ability* and *Ordination* and to *officiate*. But not to officiate before they get Ability and Ordination. It is the Duty of every Man to believe the Truth of the Gospel, and to profess that belief: But to say he believeth, when he doth not, is Hypocrisie and Lying. It is a sloathful Man's Duty to rise and dress him, and go to his Work; but not to work in Bed, or go abroad Naked. Men that need Marriage must Marry, and then *liberis operam dare*, but not to do this before they Marry. So Persons that are unfit for the Sacrament must be fit, and then receive it, but not before they are fit. Now if you can force them by a Gaol out of Ignorance, unbelief and ungodliness, it will be a very charitable work: Otherwise you force them upon Sacriledge and Profanation to their Damnation. Why else doth the Common-Prayer Book perswade the Blasphemers and *hinderers of God's*

Word, and the uncharitable not to come to that Holy Table, leſt the Devil enter into them as he did into Judas, *and fill them with all unrighteouſneſs to the deſtruction of Body and Soul.*

L. *But they that are forced to come, will be liker to take preparing Care, than if they be let alone.*

M. Look over the foregoing inſtances: Will you make a Law among Heathens that all ſhall be baptized, that this may draw them to believe? Or will you Command all Students to Adminiſter the Sacraments, that this may draw them to Study and be Ordained, *&c.* We diſſwade you not from forcing all to *Hear* and *Learn*: But do you think that it is ſo eaſie and ſmall a Matter to bring a Man to *Repent and Believe*, and give up his Heart and Life to Chriſt, and prefer Heaven before Earth, and a holy Life before a fleſhly and worldly Life, as that it is but ſay, *Do it, or thou ſhalt go to Jail?* What need a Saviour, a ſanctifying Spirit, a teaching Miniſtry, *&c.* if it be ſo eaſily done at a Command? Will the fear of a Jail make Men believe the Goſpel, or Love God? Oh how little doth this way ſavour of any true Knowledge of the State of Man, or what Faith or Sanctification is?

L. *Wherein lyeth the Sinfulneſs of ſuch force?*

M. 1. It ſeemeth to make a New Goſpel-Condition, or contradict Chriſt's. Chriſt ſaith, That none can be his Diſciple, except he forſake all, and follow him: This Courſe ſaith, Thou ſhalt be ſaved by Chriſt, if thou hadſt rather Communicate than loſe all and lie in Jail. The Sacrament is an Inveſting delivering of *Pardon* and right to Chriſt and Salvation; And none but thoſe that deſire them above all the World are capable of theſe. And to give them to the forced and unwilling is contrary to the Goſpel.

2. It ſeems to put a Lie on Chriſt, as if he had ever made any ſuch gift.

3. It tendeth to deceive poor Souls.

4. It forceth them on Sacriledge, Hypocriſie, Prophanation and Damnation.

5. It may diſtract thoſe Perſons with terror who are conſcious of their unfitneſs, or thoſe Melancholy Chriſtians that under Temptation tremble for fear of taking their own damnation.

6. It polluteth the Church, and confoundeth the Infidels, Catechumens and *Fideles*.

7. It

7. It thereby filleth the Church with such wicked men as prove worse Enemies to the godly than those without.

8. In all Elections the major part of wicked forced Communicants will carry it, to chuse Ministers like themselves, and carry Church Matters according to their wicked minds.

9. Good men seeing this, are ready to be frightned out of the Church to Separation, as men run out of a ruinous House, lest it fall on their Heads, or flie from a noisom place with loathing.

10. And then the Croud that thus get Church-possession, will revile them as Schismaticks, and Sectaries, and Hypocrites, and persecute and destroy them if they can.

Are not all these sad effects of turning a Church into a Prison, and forcing men to seem to take that which Christ professeth he doth not give them? And of casting holy things to Dogs, and Pearls before Swine; and cramming and drenching those with the Body and Blood of Christ, who have no right till they desire and beg it, and can sell all to buy this precious Pearl? We dare not Assent, Consent or Swear to such a Course as this, nor publish an Excommunication against such men on this account. It's an odd thing to cast men out because they will not come in.

And I pray you how can Ministers in great Cities and Parishes perform this Canonical Obedience, to *give in to the Bishops or Chancellor the names of all that Communicated not at Easter*, when they know not the hundredth part of the Parishioners in some places? I do believe that in the two Parishes that I last lived in, there are above fourscore thousand Souls: And is it like that the Ministers know twenty thousand of these? I have been at their Communion, even at *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, and I never saw five hundred there. And if they gave in the names of but twenty or forty thousand Non-communicants (tho' it's like there are nearer two hundred thousand) in this Dioceſs, what work would the Bishop and Chancellor have? Cannot you easily imagine what their Discipline would be, and how they would exhort each Person one by one to Repentance, and plead with them for conviction, and resolve their doubts? Doth not this one thing tell you what the *English* Diocesan Episcopacy is, that giveth one man the Disciplining of many hundred Parishes?

L. *You talk as if you would have a Church of Saints, and seem to make Religion too serious a business: It is well if we could have a Church of Civil Men and Peaceable Subjects, that will use Religion for the Civil Interest, as far as will serve the will of Governors, and the Common Peace.*

M. I am sure St. *Paul* wrote to no Church but such as he called Saints; and I am sure Christ will save none but Saints: An unsanctified Christian, and a Church not holy, are contradictions *in adjecto*. Christ came not to set up a meer worldly Kingdom, and to devise a Religion to serve the Will, Ambition or Interest of worldly men, nor meerly to promote Civility, Wealth and Peace. If this be all that you would have, go to *Aristotle*, *Plato*, *Seneca*, *Plutarch*, *Cicero*, &c. You need not be Christians for this. But yet we pretend not to know mens Hearts: It is visible Saints that the visible Church consisteth of; and with whom we must have visible Communion. And it is not left to the will of every Pastor whom he will take for a Saint; for then Churches would be of as many sorts or degrees, as Ministers strict or loose Opinions are. But Christ hath himself made the Articles Essential to Christian Faith and Practice, and the Baptismal Covenant, and required us to take those into the Church who seriously profess Belief, and Consent, till they null that Profession by a contrary Profession or Conversation; which must be proved against any man before he is rejected: For the Church is not a Society to be arbitrarily made or unmade, at every Ministers or Bishops will, but hath from Christ the fixed Laws of its Constitution and necessary Administration (better than our 141 Canons.)

But indeed you have toucht our sore: For my part I am past doubt that we should all live in Peace, and Christian Piety, if all (yea all Bishops and Priests) were but agreed at the Heart what it is to be a Christian, and whether the Gospel be certainly true, and whether Christ be the Son of God, or a deceiver, and whether there be a Life after this, and a Judgment of all according to their works: Yea, were they but heartily agreed that there is a God, who is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and a punisher of the wicked. The dispute seems to me to be, whether we shall be Christians indeed, or worldly Hypocrites called Christians; and whether we shall use the Name of God, Christ and Religion for Christ and Holiness, or for the Flesh against Christ.

L. *You*

L. *You are very severe in your Censure.*

M. I doubt some will find Christ more severe, and be less able to endure his Censure than mine, when he shall call some men to account for turning sacred Names, and Offices, and Ordinances against him, to banish Conscience and serious Godliness (to say nothing of Veracity, common Honesty and Humanity) out of the Church, and turn his House of Prayer into a place of Merchandise, and a Den of Thieves; and tempt *Turks* and Heathens to hate Christians for their wickedness, and to fly from the Christian Church, lest they should lose all Religion, Trustiness and Honesty, or the Reputation of them: But I speak not now of our Governours, whom I leave to God.

Chap. XLIII. Point XL. *Of forsaking our Ministry, and ceasing to Preach the Gospel, and Banishment Five Miles from Corporations.*

M. THE last part of Ministerial Conformity which I named to you, is, that if we cannot conform to all aforesaid, for fear of Damnation, we must cease our Ministry, and must not Preach Christs Gospel to any more than four besides our Family, nor perform any Worship of God with more, (but in their way) and we must neither dwell nor come within Five Miles of any (Burgess) Corporation, or any place where-ever we lived or travelled, and preached since the Act of Oblivion: Otherwise we must lye in the common Goal.

L. *Doubtless they that made this Law against you, thought you very wicked intolerable men, and thought your Preaching very dangerous: And indeed so they say of you in the Preface of the* Oxford *Act.*

M. They do so; and I am glad to find that falseness, and wickedness as such is yet disowned in the World, and that men do not glory in the very names of them. It is a notable evidence that there is a Life of retribution, that naughtiness is disowned by all Mankind, and the worst would be thought and called honest, and true, and good; and that the World would not Crucifie Christ, nor Persecute and Murder his Apostles under the name of righteous holy men, but under the name of Malefactors, Enemies to *Cæsar*, Breakers of the Law, and Pestilent Fellows that

that troubled the Peace, and turned the World upside down. The Devil himself dare not own the name of Lying, Malignity and Murder, nor of Persecuting Men for Truth and Goodness, and Gods Cause.

And verily it seemeth the Controversie of many in this Age, whether they that scarce speak of God but in Swearing and Cursing, nor of Religion, but in scorning or threatning the serious practisers of it, and that savour little but Eating and Drinking to the full, and Playing, and getting Riches, and hating all that are stricter than they, or those that make Gods Law their rule, and Obedience to him the work of their Lives, and his serious Worship their delight, and Heaven their hope, and dare not wilfully sin against God, nor be Perjured or Lie; I say, which of these be the honester Men?

L. *But you cannot deny that your party hath preached the Nation into Rebellion (for the Parliament against the King) and therefore are justly suspected till they repent.*

M. 1. What mean you by [*our party*?] If you mean Nonconformists to the present Laws of Conformity, you are easily confuted: For the Rebellion was over, and the King restored before the present Conformity was Enacted: And when there was no such Law, there were no Nonconformists to it, nor any such Party in being.

If you mean the old Nonconformists, I answer you,

1. They were part for the Parliament, part against their War, and part Neuters.

2. There was a multitude of Conformist Ministers for the Parliament for one Nonconformist: I have oft proved, that there was at the beginning of that Parliament, not many more Nonconformist Ministers left in *England*, than were Counties, if so many. In the *Westminster* Assembly there were but seven or eight Englishmen: Most of the Sermons before the Parliament, which are now most blamed, were Preached by Conformists.

3. Such as kept in, and obeyed the Parliament and Usurpers, did most of them Conform of 9000 or 10000 Ministers, there were but two thousand that Conformed not: And did meer turning to Conformity manifest Repentance?

4. But I have oft, and oft said, if they will silence all that had any hand in Wars, (except the Conformists) and no more, we will

will thank them with great joy : For I do not think there are forty, that I say not twenty, silenced Ministers alive in all *England*, that had any hand in the War against the King. And it's an odd kind of Justice that should eject and accuse so great a number for other mens Actions.

5. But if our Doctrine be Seditious, why should not we be allowed rather to Preach openly where Witnesses may convict us, and the Law take hold on us, than in secret to four, where none can convict us?

6. And how comes it to pass, that whilst so many hundred Ministers are hunted and ruined for Preaching, we hear of none at all punished for any False or Seditious Doctrine ? Do those that watch, accuse and ruin us, want Will to find out our false or ill Doctrine ? While I am writing this, the common Talk is, two poor Fellows accused such a one, and two Beggars, or poor Women that stood at the doors, took their Oaths against such, and such, and such, many Warrants granted to distrain for Forty Pound or Sixty Pound a Sermon, on Ministers and People; the Citizens Goods seized, and carryed away, their Shops made bare, many laid in Jayls, and thousands waiting for utter ruin of all they have; and all this on the account of their Preaching and Hearing as without the Common-Prayer; and not a word among all these of any False Doctrine spoken,

7. And Gods great mercy having of late years opened the Press, the Non-conformists have Printed abundance of their Sermons, that the World may see what Doctrine they Preached : There are two Volumes of Morning Lectures at one place, and two at another, and one Volume of Lectures against Popery. There is a great Volume of Mr. *Charnock's* Sermons, and a great one, and many lesser of Dr. *Manton's*; many Folio's of Mr. *Anth. Burgesses*, divers of Dr. *Bates*, divers of Mr *Richard Alleine's*, Dr. *Gilpin* of Temptations, and abundance more. You have an account of my own Doctrine in above an hundred Books, of which I leave Posterity to judge.

L. *Yes, we hear what is said against you for your Rebellious Doctrine in former times.*

M. I then gave the World an account in my Book called Political Aphorisms, or a Holy Common-wealth written for Monarchy by Mr. *Harrington's* Provocation, what moved me to be on the Parliaments side; and I know nothing that they have charged

on my Doctrine, but the words of that Book which I revoked long ago, and ſome Clauſes in my Saints Reſt, which I expunged before the King came in : And if my latter writings (as my Second Plea for Peace) written purpoſely to ſatisfie them of my preſent judgment, be not regardable, why do they call me to retractations? And if the Act of Indempnity have done nothing againſt our former Actions, all General *Monk*'s Army, and the reſt, ſuch that reſtored the King, muſt expect the like reward, if death deliver them not from mens wrath.

L. *But why ſhould you not give over Preaching when you are ſilenced? Have not the Biſhops power to ſilence and degrade, as well as to ordain; or the Parliament at leaſt?*

M. We doubt not but the Magiſtrate hath power to hinder Preachers from doing miſchief, and to reſtrain thoſe that Preach Rebellion, Sedition or Hereſie, or that do more hurt than good: But not on that pretence, to hinder good, and to forbid Chriſt's Miniſters to Preach his Goſpel : Biſhops and Senior Paſtors are Inveſting Miniſters of Chriſt, to ordain fit Men to the Miniſtry, and judge of their fitneſs to that end : And if men prove uncapable, by Apoſtacy or Hereſie, or Perfidiouſneſs, they ought to do as *Cyprian* did about *Martial* and *Baſilides*, require the Congregation in the name of Chriſt to forſake them. But they have no power to forbid any faithful Miniſter to do the Office to which he is ordained, nor to forbid the people to hear them : And if they do, their Commands are Nullities as to any Obligation to Obedience.

L. *But they that give you the Office may take it away.*

M. He that giveth it as a *Donor* may, which is Chriſt, but not he that only as a Servant delivereth that which his Maſter gives. If you ſend a Servant to deliver a Man Poſſeſſion of Houſe, Land, Horſe, Money, *&c.* That Servant cannot take it from him at his pleaſure. I do not think that the Prieſt that marryeth Men, can unmarry them when he will : If he could, I think he would have more work. I ſcarce think the Patron that giveth one a Benefice can take it away when he will ; which is more alienable than the Office.

A man cannot renounce it himſelf when he will, who hath ſome more power of himſelf than the Biſhop hath.

Do you not know that all are agreed that the Office of the Miniſtry is as Marriage, during Life, and not for Tryal or at Pleaſure,

ſure, except in caſe of Adultery ? Therefore the Papiſts ſay, that Ordination maketh an Indelible Character : Of this all Parties are agreed.

L. *But why ſay you the Ordainers do not give you the Power, but as Inveſting Miniſters? You are not called immediately by Chriſt as the Apoſtles were; who then doth give it you, if not the Ordainers?*

M. 1. The Office lyeth in an Obligation to great labour and great patience as well as in a gift of power. It is a power to work in a ſuffering ſtate. And as the Biſhop can oblige no man to this againſt his will, ſo neither can he oblige any man farther than Chriſt and his own conſent oblige him. Therefore it followeth that neither can he give the power farther than Chriſt giveth it ; and the Ordainers and People, and Magiſtrates have each their part under Chriſt, in the conveyance. —

L. *How doth Chriſt give Miniſters their Office?*

M. 1. He maketh a Law that there ſhall be a Miniſtry, and ſpecifieth the Office by deſcribing their work, and the neceſſary, qualification of the Perſons. So that it is not left to Biſhops nor any to alter the Office, nor to admit any uncapable Perſons into it.

2. Next Chriſt bleſſeth Mens preparatory Studies and Endeavours, and by his gifts and graces doth give them all Miniſterial Abilities.

3. He maketh them deſirous and willing of the Office and Work in Love to the bleſſed Effects, and ſo maketh them Conſenters.

4. His Providence bringeth them where their Labours are really needful.

5. He moveth the minds of the Flock or Electors to deſire, chuſe or accept them.

6. He commandeth the Ordainers to Approve and Ordain thoſe that are thus qualified as aforeſaid.

7. He commandeth Magiſtrates to protect and encourage them.

8. He commandeth the Neighbour Church-Paſtors to own them in their Neighbourly Communion. Thus you may ſee how Miniſters are made by Chriſt, though not without Mans Service.

Do you know how God maketh Marriages? 1. He inſtituteth the State, and by his Law maketh the Husband the Ruler of the Wife. 2. He cauſeth their natural Capacity and Inclination. 3. His Providence acquainteth them with each other. And 4. He moveth them to Conſent. And 5. He maketh it the Miniſters Duty to do his part; ſo that the Husbands power is of God.

Do you know who giveth the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of *London* their power? 1. The King by *Charter* determineth what power, they ſhall have, and how they ſhall be qualified, and how choſen, and how ſworn and inveſted. 2. The Citizens accordingly chooſe them. 3. And the Recorder Sweareth them. VVho is it now that giveth them the power? The King's Charter, though not till they be duly qualified and choſen. The Recorder cannot depoſe them again; No, nor the Citizens (who may do more) unleſs it be in the Charter.

L. *But what Sin fear you by ceaſing your miniſtry?*

M. 1. We fear the guilt of perfidious breaking of our Ordination Vow, by which we ſolemnly obliged our ſelves to diligent performing of our Miniſtry. The Biſhops put thoſe of us on this whom they ordained, who now would force us to violate it.

2. Therein we fear the guilt of Sacriledge, as alienating perſons conſecrated to God. And we can judge it to be no better than Phariſaical Hypocriſie, in them that aggravate the Sacriledge of alienating conſecrated Utenſils and Lands, and yet will alienate conſecrated Perſons, and take it to be well done: whereas the Lands and Goods are but to ſerve the perſons who are nearer to God, while they ſerve him.

3. We fear the Sin of Cruelty, Unmercifulneſs, and the guilt of Damning Souls. As if we were commanded to forbear feeding our Children, or the Poor, we ſhould expect to be charg'd with Murdering them, if they died of Famine, by our Neglect.

4. We fear being charged with fighting againſt Chriſt, or as Enemies to his Kingdom, and to his Saving Work: He was ſo great an Eſteemer of Souls and Holineſs, that by the greateſt of Miracles, he came in Fleſh to redeem, and ſanctifie, and ſave Men: And if we ſtarve and betray them to Satan by our neglect, we are Enemies to his ſaving Work and Office. And he that condemneth

them

them that do not feed, and clothe, and visit them, may condemn us more, if we betray their Souls.

5. We fear being guilty of serving the Devil, in deserting and betraying Souls that are our trust: As a Captain that should desert his Station and fly, or should desert his Garrison and Trust, doth let in the Enemy: Or, as Christ saith, *The hireling fleeth and leaveth the flock to Wolves*: God saith to the Negligent watchman, *Ezek.* 33. *Their blood will I require at thy hands.*

6. We shall be a Temptation to the people to imitate us, and forsake the truth, and turn from Christ: For if the Captains fly, the Soldiers are like to follow. And if we may cease Ministerial piety, they may think they may as well cease Family and private piety.

7. We may look for the doom of the sloathful Servant that hid his Master's Talent, and was sentenced to be cast for it *into outer Darkness.*

8. We cast away our hopes of Salvation by Christ, if we cast away our Evidence of our Title to his Love: As he charged *Peter*, three times, If he loved him to feed his Sheep and Lambs; so the same extends to us: We tell him that we love him not, when we wilfully deny to feed his Flock.

9. The charge is dreadful that *Paul* lays on *Timothy*, and consequently on us, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. *I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom; that thou Preach the Word, be instant, in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.* When we recite *Paul*'s words, *Necessity is laid upon me, and wo unto me if I preach not the Gospel*;] Some are so vain as to say, that this woe belongs to none but those that Christ called immediately, as if Men ordinarily called had no such Necessity. But *Timothy* was not called immediately by Christ.

10. Christ himself hath told us, that he that puts his hand to the Plow, and looks back, is not fit for the Kingdom of God: And that the Servant that will be blessed, must give the Children their Meat in season, and be found so doing. For these Reasons we dare not forsake our Office and Work.

L. *But when you cannot do it, you are blameleſs.*

M. That's true: But we muſt do what we can: Chriſt foretold his Miniſters how they ſhould be uſed, Hated, Scourged, Killed, and yet will have them go on to the Death. *When they perſecute you in one City, flee to another*, was his charge; what we cannot do in one place we may do in another; and if we cannot Preach to more, we muſt do it to fewer. No Suffering will excuſe us, (much leſs bare Prohibitions) which do not diſable us.

L. *But by this Rule, every ſilenced Heretick may go on, and make himſelf the Judge, that he is unjuſtly ſilenced.*

M. And by your Rule of holding nothing which Men may abuſe, all good may be put down. Uſurpers may pretend that it's them that we muſt obey: Muſt not we therefore obey the King? Lyers will claim belief: Muſt we therefore believe no body? Reaſon is pretended for every Errour and Wickedneſs: Muſt we therefore renounce Reaſon? So falſe Teachers may Preach when they are forbidden: Muſt therefore Chriſt's Miniſters give over, becauſe Men forbid them? Did the Church do ſo for three hundred years?

L. *Then it had no Chriſtian Magiſtrates?*

M. Have Chriſtian Magiſtrates more right to ſilence the Preaching of the Goſpel, deſtroy Souls, and oppoſe Chriſt's Work, than Heathens have?

2. Were not *Conſtantius*, *Valens*, *Theodoſius* 2d. *Anaſtaſius*, *Zeno*, &c. Chriſtian Emperors, and yet the Biſhops went on when they forbad them: Read Biſhop *Bilſon* of *Chriſtian Subjection*, and he will tell you that Chriſtian Princes are to Protect Chriſt's Miniſters in their Work: but if they forbid it them, they muſt go on, and ſuffer patiently what ſhall be done againſt them for it.

L. *But what need is there of your Preaching? Have we not Miniſters enough without you? Hath not every Pariſh one? And ſome ſay many Thouſands are Ordained of late that want Benefices.*

M. Whether our Miniſtry be needful is matter of Fact ſo eaſily diſcernable to *Engliſhmen*, that I think him ſcarce meet for theſe debates that doubteth of it, if he know the Land.

1. The Supernumeraries that want Benefices, do not help the needy Pariſhes, but dwell in the Univerſities, or as Chaplains in Great Mens Houſes, to read the Common-Prayer and ſay Grace at Meat, till a Benefice fall.

2. The

2. The greater sort of Parishes have more Work than many Ministers can do: They have besides Study and Preaching, Children to Baptize, Godfathers to Examine whether ever they Communicated, Communicants must beforehand give them notice, the Scandalous and Contentious must be admonished, all the Communicants examined, whether they are Confirmed, or ready and desirous to be Confirmed, all that Communicate not, to have their Names taken and sent in to the Bishop; all that are refused the Sacrament to be notified to the Court, and prosecuted, the Sick to be visited, the Ignorant and Impenitent to be taught and exhorted; Marrying, Burying, the Poor to be taken care of, and much more. And about *London* it is credibly said, that there can be no less in the great Parishes than Two Hundred Thousand Persons more than the Parish-Churches will hold: It's thought that *Martin's*, and *Giles's in the Fields*, and *Giles's Cripplegate*, and *Stepney* alone, have near an Hundred and Fourscore, if not Two Hundred Thousand Persons in them: A tender-hearted Man would be loth to Famish, or otherwise Kill Two Hundred Thousand Dogs: It was the greatest Massacre that hath been heard of in any credible History of late (if not at any time) when the *Irish* in so small a compass murdered two Hundred Thousand Protestants: But to starve Souls, or by omission of our Duty to betray them to that Ignorance and Ungodliness which is the Cause of Damnation, is worse than to Kill the Body. There cannot past Four Thousand hear in these Churches: Yea, usually, not past Two Thousand can hear the Preacher's Voice, intelligently; though Five Thousand or Six Thousand may come within the Doors.

And if you suppose that in these Four Parishes, Sixteen Thousand may hear one Day, and those stay at home, and Sixteen Thousand more hear the next Day (or time), Thirty Two Thousand is but a small part of Eightscore Thousand: And if so far the greatest number must turn practical Atheists, and not publickly Worship God at all, why should not such places be denominated Pagan or Atheists from so much the greater part?

L. *But what is four Parishes to all the rest, and the Common Case?*

M. I pray you enquire in *Clement Danes*, *Westminster*, *Andrews Holborn*, *Sepulchres*, *Christ-Church*, *Aldgate*, *Shoreditch*, *White-Chappel*, *Olives* and *Magdalenes Southwark*, &c. and you may hear how many others come near to the same Case: And must so famous a City as *London* be Paganized or made so Atheistical?

L. *You*

L. *You lay heavy Charges on the Parliament and Biſhops that have ſilenced you: you are beſt take heed what you ſay.*

M. No honeſt heed will ſecure a man in this Age of malignity and perjury. But you miſtake me: I meddle not with the *Parliament*, Laws, or Biſhops, much leſs with the King: I leave all men to their righteous Judge, who is at the door: To his Judgment they ſtand or fall: I only tell you what I think it would be in us that are Vowed to the ſacred Miniſtry, if we deſert our Office and Work for Man's prohibition.

L. *But all theſe People that you talk of, may find room in other Pariſh Churches: Many Churches in* London *are half empty, or have room enough.*

M. Do you not know that the *London* Churches were burnt down 1666, and to this day it's but few of them that are built again; but Miniſters preach in ſmall inconvenient Tabernacles: And thoſe that are built, the Seats are commonly all taken up long ago, and lock'd up: I heard the laſt Week an Eminent Eſquire ſay, that he offer'd Five *Pound* for a Seat, and could have none, and he was not able to ſtand ſo long with the Lads in the Alley. People will not let Strangers into their Seats, when they are Crowded with the Owners: I come into no Church that hath a competent ſober Preacher, that is not full; Alleys and Seats. And I pray you if Ten Thouſand out of *Stepney*, or *Martins*, or *Giles* would go about the City to ſeek for Church-room: 1. How ſhall they know beforehand in what Churches to find it? 2. When they miſs it in three or four, the time will be over before they find it in a fifth. 3. Few but ſtrong men are able to ſtand ſo long in the Alleys without Seats. 4. And this ſuppoſeth them to be honeſt thirſty Souls that have leaſt need; whereas the worſer ſort that have no ſuch appetite are the Multitude, who will ſtay at home if they have not convenience near them. 5. And the moſt willing People will hardly travel far to hear a man rail at them and ſlander them, as ſome do.

L. *But what great ſupply of this defect do your Meetings make? Are not moſt of them in the Pariſhes where there is room? And are not moſt of your Hearers ſuch as you think have leaſt need?*

M. 1. As many Meetings are held in the Greater Pariſhes as will be endured, and more would be, could they be ſuffered at any poſſible rate.

2. Thoſe

2. Thoſe that dwell in the greater Pariſhes, can go further into the leſs, when they know before-hand that they have there room and hired Seats. The Meetings that have been kept up in the City Pariſhes, were as much for others, as for the Pariſhioners, and were there continued, becauſe there was till of late the leaſt diſturbance, and gentleſt proſecution.

3. Thoſe that have leaſt need, yet have ſo great need, as is more regardable than any bodily want: Souls and Heaven are precious, and all Men have Sins and Weakneſſes and Temptations, and all helps poſſible are little enough to ſecure our Salvation.

4. When godly Perſons are at our Aſſemblies, they take not up that room in the Pariſh-Churches which others would have, and ſo exclude not others.

L. *But after all your meetings, there are ſtill as many thouſands as you talk of that go to no Church.*

M. We are unwilling to be found any Cauſe of that. The more need there is, the greater is our guilt, if we neglect what we can do for the ſupply.

L. *But what's this to the common Caſe of Country Pariſhes?*

M. For my part I would have no ſilenced Miniſter preach where there is not evident need. But the Country alas is not without need. 1. Some Pariſhes are ſo great, that part of the Inhabitants have more miles to come to Church, than the Aged, Women, Weak and Children can Travel. 2. Too many have ſuch Teachers as the people dare not take for their Paſtors, any more than an Ignorant Quack for their Phyſician, or one for their School-maſter that cannot read. 3. Some had able Learned Paſtors turned out, and they cannot prove that their relation to them as ſuch is diſſolved. 4. Some by the ruining Proſecutions of the Clergy and Biſhops Counſels are caſt into an over-great averſneſs to them, and will not take ſuch for their Paſtors, as they think have the Teeth and Claws of Wolves. And will not travel far to ſeek Figs and Grapes on Thorns and Thiſtles. And if theſe Erre and be to be blamed, they are not therefore to be *forſaken*, any more than our Children, if they cannot eat Cheeſe, are to be famiſhed and denied all other food.

But I must refer you to a full Treatise which I have written to justifie our preaching, called, *An Apology* for it: At least, I pray you Study these Texts of Scripture, *Mat.* 5. 13, 14, 15, 16. and 28. 19, 20. *Eph.* 4. 10, to 17. 1 *Tim.* 4. 15, 16. 1 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2. *Mat.* 24. 45, 46, 47, 48. *Act.* 4. 19. and 5. 28. 1 *Cor.* 9. 14, 16. *Act.* 4. 29. 2 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2, 3. 1 *Tim.* 6. 13, 14. 2 *Tim.* 1. 8, 11, 12, 13. *Tit.* 2. 15. 1 *Pet.* 5. 1, 2, 3. 2 *Tim.* 2. 2, 24, 25. *Eph.* 6. 19, 20. *Mat.* 10. 7, 8, 16, 17, &c. and 9. 38. *Luk.* 9. 62. and 10. 2.

L. *But why may you not keep away five miles from Corporations and places where you have Preached?*

M. Did you not say even now, That small Countrey Parishes have no need of us? One Man may serve for Two Hundred or a Thousand, better than for many Thousands.

2. The Reasons of our Preaching is Men's real need, and the Churches good: Therefore we are most obliged, *cæteris paribus*, where there is most need, and most probability of doing good,

3. Christ bids us, *When they persecute you in one City, fly to another*: And the Apostles first planted their Churches in Cities. If you know the Reasons of these, you know our Reasons.

To conclude, whose Service is it, think you, to perswade Two Thousand such Ministers to give over their Preaching and Ministry? whose Interest requireth it? Did Christ or his Apostles ever do or perswade such a thing? But the way to bring us all to Popery is to disable its chief Adversaries, and to obliterate all Religion first, that Ignorance and Unconscionableness may be receptive of a new Form. You must take your Church-Bells, and break and melt them, if you will cast them anew to bring them to a new sound and use.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIV. *Of Lay Conformity.* Point I. *Whether all Men must trust their Souls only on the Pastoral Care of such as our Patrons choose, and Bishops institute.*

L. *I Thought you would have objected only against Forms and Gestures, and you talk of matters that affright one at the very stating of the Case: But how are all Lay-men thus obliged?*

M. I have before cited the express words of the Canon: They must be presented and prosecuted if they come not to their *Parish*-Churches: They must be driven home from all Neighbour-Churches, if it be one that never preacheth that they go from, and must be Excommunicate at last; the Minister must be suspended that admits them.

L. *But Bishop* Gunning's *Chaplain saith well, that you may yet privately advise with other Ministers.*

M. I take that from them for a great favour, that they drive us not from all Christian converse, but give us leave to speak privately with more than the *Parish-Priest*: But even privately it must be no Non-conformist, for they cannot be heard at five Miles distance.

But will you seriously tell me, 1. Whether most parish Ministers have not so much Work at home, that they have little time to spare for Strangers?

2. Whether as Men provide first for their own Families before they relieve Neighbours and the poor; so Ministers will not think themselves bound to do by their own *Parishes*? and scarce afford the scraps to others?

3. Do you think in Conscience that all Souls, and specially the most Ignorant have not need of a constant Pastor, and the help of his Office, as well as of an occasional Discourse with a Stranger? If not, what have we Parish-priests for, and why pay we Tythes to them?

L. *But all Places cannot have profound Casuists, and extraordinary Learned holy men:* Few Churches had an *Augustine*, a *Chrysostom*, a *Basil*, or *Nazianzen*.

M. All Men cannot have excellent Physicians, nor rich Trades, nor pleasant Dwellings, nor excellent Wives or Servants, *&c.*

But I think it's lawful to have the beſt they can get : Or at leaſt to refuſe the intolerable. I had rather truſt Nature for my Phyſitian, than an ignorant Quack or a Knave.

L. *But we have many ſound and worthy miniſters.*

M. And I perſwade none to go from ſuch, if their faithful diligence ſhew their worth. It is not theſe that we are ſpeaking of. Are there no other ?

L. *The meaneſt of them ſpeak ſound Doctrine : Even thoſe that the Canon forbids to Preach or Expound, do read the Scriptures and ſound Homilies.*

M. So can a good Woman or a Child : And an ignorant Man or Woman can read a good Phyſick or Law-Book. Will you therefore take them for your Phyſicians or Lawyers ? Do you know the caſe of our Pariſhes or not ? Tell me what you would do your ſelf in this caſe.

Suppoſe a poor Sinner is convinced of his great Ignorance and dulneſs, and ſinful inclinations, and ſtrong Temptations, and finds great difference between a clear Judicious, Skilful, ſerious Miniſter and others, and yet that the beſt doth prove too little for his help : This Man dwells in a Pariſh where in the Pulpit he heareth a young Fellow ſometime read a Cento of impertinent ſhreds, as School-boys make an ignorant Declamation : And ſometimes he heareth him tell them what damnable Hypocrites they are, and Schiſmaticks, that ſcruple any thing commanded by the Church, and then make long Prayers, and talk religiouſly to hide it : And in Company he hath not a ſerious word for a Holy Life, and to prepare Men for another World, but ſometimes reviles *Puritans*, and at beſt talks of worldly things, or Opinions or Factions in Religion ; and perhaps will be Drunk and Rant it with the moſt prophane His *Pariſhioner* in Doubts and Trouble of Conſcience comes to him for Satisfaction ; And the beſt Anſwer he can get is, [*What Puritan put theſe Fears or Scruples in your head ? If you trouble your mind about ſuch matters you will ſhortly turn Schiſmatick or go mad : Truſt God, and follow your Buſineſs, and be merry. The Scripture is for Divines, and not for ſuch as you ; It is above your Capacity.*] The *Pariſhioner* having no better Anſwer, goeth no more : And perhaps an hundred or a thouſand in the *Pariſh* have more need of *Paſtoral* help, than this Man : And in the *Pulpit* he *Preacheth* them aſleep,

or

or into Laughter, or into hatred of *Puritans*; and out of the *Pulpit* doth drink, and talk, and live as they.

2. Suppose these Men hear the Clergy tell why they Silence and Banish, and render odious such Men as we are: And they think with themselves, we perceive by this that it is not indifferent what *Pastors* we have: And if these reviled Men be so bad, is our *Priest* any better, or wiser or honester, or more to be trusted?

3. Suppose these poor people had a Teacher twenty or ten years that is now cast out, whose preaching they found to be clear and edifying, and quickening; that preacht all for Faith, and Hope, and Love, and Holiness, and *Peace*, and Heaven; and lived in exemplary Charity, *Piety*, and Righteously and Soberly, and unweariedly taught them with tenderness publickly and from House to House. And the sense and experience of their Souls tells them how great the change of their condition is?

4. Suppose these Men hear the Teacher called *Arminian*, deriding Infusions of the Spirit and Grace, and proving that God worketh on Souls morally by the aptitude of means, and teacheth and changeth Men as rational Creatures?

Can you blame this Man if he conclude [My Soul is more to me than my Life: my Necessity is unquestionable: my Experience what edifieth me is not to be born down by the scorn of a derider. I am dark and dull, and too bad under the best helps, but alas profit little by an insipid, sleepy or deriding Speech. As no man hath power to tie me to marry an ugly Scold, or to trust a Fool, or Knave, or Enemy for my *Physician*; so no man hath power to deprive me of the needful helps to my Salvation, when I can have them.

L. *But they all Preach the same Word of God.*

M. Do you think the mysterious Invisible things of Faith, and the multitude of hard Cases in Obedience, and the many dangerous Distempers of a carnal, worldly, dead Heart, have not need of as skilful a Helper, as the profession of Law and *Physick* hath? How vast a difference is there between an ignorant *Prater*, and a skilful Lawyer or *Physician*? And as I have more care of my Soul than of my Body, so mens Laws have less power over it.

L. *I do not think the World hath a better Clergy than the Church of* England.

M. I do challenge oft any to name that Nation under Heaven out of the Kings Dominions that hath Two Thousand worthier Ministers than those that were here silenced, and reviled, and hunted like Rogues. But I pray you tell me,

1. Do you know how many, and what sort of men the patrons in *England* are that chuse them? The Conformists oft say that many of them are Simonists: It's well known that many of them are taken for the Famousest *Papists* in the Countrey. Though they have the Wit and Faculty to keep off Legal Conviction, or else to manage their Advowsons by Trustees. And O how well were it with *England* if none or few of them were Worldlings, Gluttons, Drunkards, Whoremongers, or Haters, or prosecutors of serious godly men? Is there any Body doubts whether there be such? And though good and sober Lords and Gentlemen will promote good and sober men, the propagation of the species is the most natural Appetite; and an evil Tree will bring forth evil Fruit, and a Hater of Godliness is unlike to chuse a godly *Pastor*. And any man that hath Money, be he never so bad or erroneous may buy an Advowson or *Presentation*. And must all poor Souls have no other *Pastors* than these men will chuse?

And *quo jure*? how came they by a right to chuse *Pastors* for all the Land? Did God ever give it them?

The people at first sinfully gave it them, in blind gratitude, for Building and Endowing Temples. But Mens Grant many Hundred years ago, being sinful, hath no power to bind our Consciences: Our Fore-fathers might give their Lands from their posterity, but they could not give away Gods Ordinances, nor the means of our Salvation. If *Patrons* might ill dispose of Temples and Tythes, that's nothing to prove that they may chuse *Pastors* for all men against their Wills.

L. *But the Bishops have the power of Institution, and they will keep out unworthy men.*

M. 1. Do they *de facto* keep them out? I told you truly what a company of ignorant drunken Readers I was bred up under till I was thirteen years of Age, or fourteen, and what a sort were round about us: And yet the Bishops were as good men as any I know

know now. Bishop *Morton* was our Bishop. If we are so hardly agreed in a notorious matter of Fact, *viz.* what Pastors multitudes of Parishes now have, it's in vain to dispute of any thing else.

2. When we have told the Conformists what men are Instituted, their common answer is, that it's long of the Patrons, and the Law, that enableth not the Bishop to keep them out: And that if the Bishop deny Institution to any one that can but say some account of his Faith in Latin, a *quare impedit* will force him to Institute him. But whether you will lay it on the Bishops want of Power, or their Will, it's no relief to the miserable People.

And that which the Bishop requireth more to Ordination, is but a Certificate of a good Conversation; which I never knew man so Heretical or wicked in all my Life, that could not get from three Ministers.

L. *Would you have Patrons turned out of their right?*

M. No, it is no right of Gods giving to be the sole Choosers of Pastors for mens Souls. There is a threefold part in Ministers admittance. 1. To judge who is fit to be by them Ordained: And this is the Ordainers part.

2. To Chuse or Consent who shall be the Pastor of Mens Souls: And this is the Peoples part.

3. To judge and chuse who shall have the publick Places, Maintenance, Countenance and Toleration: And this is the Magistrates and Patrons part.

L. *But these three may differ, and it's like will do so; how then shall ever the Churches be provided?*

M. There is nothing in this World without difficulties and inconveniences: But on so great a Treasure a threefold Lock is good security; and hath less inconvenience than the way that we are against. It's like necessity will at last make all consent, (as the Cities in *Belgium* do in their Government.) But if they should not; 1. None can chuse who shall be the pastor of this or that Church, till the Ordainers consent that he be in general a Minister in the Church Universal: So that their Consent so far is previous.

2. If the patron offer an unfit Man, and the people refuse him, he may offer others: If they continue to disagree, it is but

let

let the Patron chuſe who ſhall have the Place and Tythes, and the people chuſe who ſhall be their Paſtor.

L. *What confuſion will this bring in ? Shall one that is no Paſtor have the Benefice ? And whom ſhall the People chuſe, and where ſhall they Aſſemble ?*

M. If great Men that ſhould keep Gods Order, will obſtinately break it, its they that cauſe the confuſion, and inferiors cannot remedy it. But if you will lay by prejudice and have patience I ſhall open the caſe to you.

I. The Magiſtrate as the *P*atron of the Church, muſt ſee that every place have competent Teaching : And over the meer Catechumens or Auditors, he may appoint who ſhall chuſe theſe Pariſh Teachers, and to them as ſuch he may give the publick place and Maintenance (if Original Dedication to *P*aſtors as ſuch make it not Sacriledge to alienate it.) And theſe Teachers are bound to *P*reach, Catechiſe, and do all that's due to Catechumens.

II. If theſe men be tolerable, no doubt the generality of the people will chuſe them for their *P*aſtors, prudence requiring it; rather than loſe the advantage of the place, and of a countenanced maintained Miniſtry.

III. If intolerable Men get in, or ſuch as the Flock of Communicants cannot ſubmit to, it's moſt like that the people will for the advantage of the publick place and countenance, take ſome Neighbour *P*aſtor for theirs, and there Communicate, paying their Tythes at home.

IV. If moſt chuſe the *P*ariſh Teacher for their *P*aſtor, and a few Diſſenters go to the next *P*ariſh Church, the inconvenience will be comparatively ſmall.

V. If any number can conſent to no *P*ariſh Miniſter near them, it is but to tolerate their Communion in a place of their own preparing, if the Magiſtrate find their *P*rinciples and Converſation tolerable, and this under Laws of *P*eace and good Behaviour ; and what harm is in all this ?

L. *It*

L. *It seems then you take it for unlawful Conformity, to take the Parish Ministers for our Pastors.*

M. No Sir; though any Patron chuse them, and obtrude them, to whom God hath given no such right, yet if they be fit or tolerable Men, the convenience of Place, Countenance, Maintenance, and Parish Order, will teach Men, as I said, *finis gratiâ*, in prudence to consent to them. But if such be unfit and intolerable, I will have better, if I can. And I take it for unlawful Conformity to take all, or any that are intolerable, for our Pastors, because such Patrons chuse them; who, I should be loth, should chuse my Servants, my Cook, or my Physician. And it's unlawful to give away to a Patron, the Churches Right of Election or Consent, if we can keep it.

Chap. XLV. Point II. *Whether Parents have not more right than our Patrons to chuse Pastors and Church Communion for their Children.*

M. II. THE next Fault of Lay-Conformity is, That they are deprived of due Family-Government, while a Stranger called Patron, and not the Parents, must chuse who shall be Pastor to their Children when they are at Age; and to what Church their Family shall go.

L. *Did not you say before, that the King may settle Teachers in all the Parishes, and force men to hear them? Why then may he not force you and your Children, and Servants to hear them, as Catechumens?*

M. I told you that he ought to take care that no Parish want a fit Teacher, whom the unwilling may hear. 2. And that the negligent and unwilling be forced to hear either them or some other allowed, or justly tolerated Teacher. But I never said that 1. Because the *Catechumens* may be forced to hear their Parish Teacher, who are Free-men, therefore those that are VVives, Children, and Servants, may be forced to go to one Church, when the Husband, Parent or Master commands them to go with him to another. 2. Nor yet that those Masters that are Communicants, and not Catechumens, may be forced from hearing their own Pastors, approved or tolerated. It's enough that they be forced to hear either. And Men ought not to be deprived of the due Government of their Families.

L. *Is not the Patron as fit to chuſe a Teacher or Paſtor for your Wives, Children and Servants as you are?*

M. No; 1. A Mans Intereſt in, and power over his VVife and Children is earlier and greater than a Patrons is It is natural, and by a Law, which no Men have power to abrogate: Self-government and Family-government are antecedent to Princes or States Government, and they have no right to diſſolve it.

2. I ſhall gain or loſe more by the welfare or miſery of my Family than the Patron will.

3. Nature hath given me a greater Love to VVife and Children, and bound me to a greater care for them, than it hath done a Patron.

4. I know them better, and therefore know what they need, and what Teacher and Communion is fit for them, better than a Patron that never ſaw them or me.

5. Suppoſing that I am allowed to chuſe my own Paſtor and Communion, it will be inconſiſtent with Family-government, that my VVife, Children and Servants be forced to go to another place, where I can have no account of them what they do, and how they behave themſelves.

6. If no Man may juſtly chuſe for my Children a Tutor, a Trade, a Phyſician, or Diet, or Cloathing, rather than my ſelf, (much leſs a worſe when I chuſe a better;) nor may impoſe Husbands or VVives on them, much leſs may any chuſe for them againſt my will and choice, an Office on which their Salvation is ſo ſpecially concerned.

L. *But if you may force your Wife and Children to what Paſtor you chuſe for them, it ſeems then a Man may be forced to one Paſtor, rather than another: And then why may not the Magiſtrate force you, as well as you may force your Family?*

M. You miſtake me; I do not ſay I may force my Family to any Paſtor: I ſay, if they that are not Communicants but Catechumens, may be forced to one Teacher, it's meeter for me to force them, than for a Patron or any other.

2. But as to Communion I will not force them to it at all; nor to this or that Paſtor: But becauſe different Places and Paſtors for Communion, ſignifieth different minds, and will be a great diſtracting inconvenience to a Family, I will uſe all my Reaſon and Loving Intereſt in them to bring them all to one place for Communion: And its very ſtrange if I prevail not; having better advantage

vantage to satisfie their reason, and to perswade them, than a stranger hath; so that such Breaches will be very rare.

But if I be as injurious to them as some Patrons are, and would draw them to chuse an intolerable Pastor, or false Teacher, it is their Interest and Duty not to be perswaded by me to their hurt.

L. *What confusion will this make in the World, when all people, even Wives and Servants may chuse on what Pastor they will depend, and where they will Communicate.*

M. It were a happy World if you, or any did deliver it from differences, yea, or confusion. But perfect concord is no where but where is perfect knowledge, holiness, righteousness and love. If it breed confusions in the World that every Man chuse his own Dwelling, Trade, Diet, Cloathing, Wife, Servants, Travels, Company, Physician, Counsellor, Tutor, Master, Books, *&c.* And so that their Life, Death and Souls be more in their own power than anothers, there is no remedy: If you would devise any other Chuser for them of all these, you would cure that disorder with madness and destruction; who is it that should chuse all these for all other Men? He that chuseth for them must answer for them, and must be accordingly saved or damned for them. If God had appointed some Pope that he would always make wise and good, to chuse for the Kingdoms of *China*, *Pegu*, *Tartary*, *Japan*, *Sumatra*, and all the rest of the World, what Religion they should be of, and what they should love and hate, speak and do, it would have brought the World to a happy state, if all would stand to that Mans choice: But who can teach God how to Rule the World, and say, Thou shouldst have made Man otherwise.

Will you mark this: Either it is only to *command* Men what to chuse, or else to *make them chuse* by efficient determination of their Wills, or else to move them by force without or against their Wills; that you would have the World saved from sin and confusion. There is but these three ways.

And I. To move them against or without their *Wills*, is *natural motion* or *violent*, and will make none of their actions good or bad in a Moral sence: *Nil nisi voluntarium est morale:* Thus a Horse, a VVatch, a Ship is governed: And you may lay them in what order you will, when they are dead.

II. To make them good by Physical efficient determination of Mens wills, God can do it and doth not, at least, with most. Man cannot do it: It's madness to pretend to it. And I hope you will not accuse God, who only can do it, for not curing the sin and confusions of the World this way.

III. It is therefore only the Moral way of cure that remaineth, by Laws, Rewards and Punishments: And hath not God made better Laws for Religion than Man can make? More infallible and perfect, with more awful power, and with ten thousand fold greater Rewards and Punishments? And now what mean you by saying that *every Man must not be left to chuse what Religion he list*? 1. Every Man is a rational voluntary Agent, and not a Stone or Brute. 2. Every bad Man is left undetermined by efficiency of God or Man in all the evil that he doth. 3. Every one in the World is left by God and Man to chuse Salvation or Damnation in the means, and to speed as he chuseth. 4. No Man is left Lawless to chuse what he will without the obligation of a perfect Divine Law.

L. *But men that believe not a God, and a Life to come, must be moved by temporal punishment which they can feel. Let them stay till death, and they will deride Religion, and live in wickedness.*

M. You are too confused while you talk against confusion.

1. Do you think men that believe not a God and a Life to come, are fit for Church Communion, and may be forced to it? No nor any that do not desire Christ, Grace and Glory before all the Baits of sin.

2. Did you think I had pleaded that men may without punishment do what they list, and live in wickedness? It's one thing to *restrain them from sin*, and another to *constrain them to sin* under the name of Religion.

3. Nor did I speak against constraining Atheists and Infidels and malignant Enemies to hear the Gospel.

4. But your force cannot constrain them to believe. And

5. You ought not to constrain them to lie and say they believe.

6. And you ought not prophanely to lie in Christ's Name, by telling an unwilling Communicant, That all his sins are pardoned. and that you Seal it to him.

Do as much good by force as you can, but do no mischief.

L. *But*

L. *But hath not the King more power over your Family than you have? Sure the higheſt power is the greateſt, and containeth all the lower in it.*

The laſt words are a great miſtake: Political power doth not contain Natural, Perſonal and Oeconomical, and Eccleſiaſtical in it; but ſuppoſeth them all unalterable and pre-exiſtent, and only uſeth them to Political ends, that is, the ſafety and good of the Commonwealth: And as far as this end requireth, the King hath more power of my Wife, Children, Eſtate, Life, than I have: That is, he may ſee that I uſe my Perſonal and Family Government ſo, as may not hurt the Commonwealth, and do more harm than good.

But that Politick power doth neither *contain* nor *abrogate* the other is evident. 1. The King doth not eat and drink for me, nor digeſt my meat, nor rejoyce or grieve for me. 2. The King doth not ſin by my ſinning, nor ſhall be judged, ſaved or damned for me. 3. The King may not chuſe my Wife, Diet, *&c.* As aforeſaid: Nor hath he right to lye with your Wife as you have, nor to diſpoſe of your Children or Propriety. 4. The King that ruleth Prieſts, may not do what the Prieſt doth. Adminiſter Sacraments, uſe the Church Keys, *&c.* So that all that he can do, is to over-rule perſonal, Family and Church Governours, to the common good, without deſtroying them.

L. *It is for the Common good that all be forced to Communion.*

M. Yes, if you can firſt force them to Faith and Holineſs, elſe it is for the common Church-confuſion, Corruption, and mens deceit and damnation, and not the common good.

Chap XLVI. Point III. *Of forcing Men to Schiſm, by Renouncing* Communion *with true* Churches *and* Members *of* Chriſt.

M. III. THE Third unlawful part of *Lay-Conformity* is, that they muſt be forced from Local Communion with all the *Non-conformiſts* that Aſſemble any where, ſave in the Pariſh-Churches or Chappels, and ſo under pretence of driving them from Schiſm, they are driven into notorious Schiſm.

L. *How prove you that its their Duty to have any ſuch Communion with Non-conformiſts Conventicles? If you are Schiſmaticks, it's a ſin to Communicate with you.*

M. 1.

M. 1. I prove Communion with us a Duty; (Though it be not every Man's Duty to be Locally present with us, it is every Mans Duty not to avoid it as an unlawful thing, but to be willing of it as he hath occasion).

2. It is a Duty for all Christians to own Communion with all true Members of the Body of Christ. But Nonconformists and their Assemblies for Worship, are true Members of the Body of Christ. *Ergo* ——

The *major* is most fully proved by Christ, *Joh.* 17. 24. and *Paul* 1 *Cor.* 12. throughout, and *Eph.* 4. 1, 2, 3, to the 17. and *Rom.* 14 and 15. and many other Scriptures.

The *minor* I prove. All those are true Members of the Body of Christ, who have all the Essentials necessary to the Constitution of such Members. But so have the Non-conformists and their Church Assemblies (as afore described:) *Ergo.*

The *major* none but the ignorant of Logick will deny.

As to the *minor*, They that have true Christian Faith, Hope, and Love, have all that is Essential to personal Members: And the Churches that have Pastors and People communicating in that Faith, Hope and Love, in Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments and tolerable Discipline, are true Churches, parts of the Universal Church. But such are many Persons and Churches of Non-conformists. *Ergo.*

The *major* all sound and knowing Christians grant.

For the *minor* no proof is necessary but our Profession, till it be disproved. And let the Accusers of the Brethren, as they love themselves, take this warning before they undertake to disprove it: Do it by no Argument that will ten times more condemn your selves and your Church, than such Non-conformists.

2. The second Argument is this: It is a Sin of Schism to refuse Communion with those that Christ receiveth, so we own not any of their sin: *Rom.* 15. 6. *&c.* But Christ receiveth (into his Communion) the foresaid Non-conformists and their Worshiping Assemblies. Proved as before.

3. It is a Sin to deny the lawfulness of Communion with Christians and their Assemblies, for lesser faults than those Persons and Assemblies had, whose Communion Christ and his Apostles were for: But so must they that will deny the lawfulness of Communion with the said Non conformists and their Assemblies.—

The

The *major* none will deny that take Christ and his Apostles for their Teachers.

The *minor* is easily proved: The Church of the *Jews* had *Priests* unlawfully introduced, and corrupt Teachers, and Worship, and yet Christ disowned not Communion with them in Synagogues, and Temples, and Houses, save only that he conformed not to their sinful Traditions and Corruptions. The Church of the *Corinthians* had Men guilty of Schism, and Faction, and quarrelling with the Apostle, wronging each other, sinful Law Suits, Scandalous Persons, denying the Resurrection, grosly abusing the Sacrament and Communion, *&c.* The Churches of *Galatia*, *Ephesus*, *Smyrna*, *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, &c. had such faults as I need not tell you of. Yet no Man is bid or allowed to disown Communion with them. You can truly prove no such by those in question.

Arg. 3. *ad hominem*: It is Lawful to Communicate with the Churches of *England*, that have more Faults than the Non-conformists: *Ergo*, It is Lawful to Communicate with them that have fewer.

We challenge any to prove so many and such Faults by us as I have here before proved by your Church. And if for ours, Separation from us be a Duty from yours, it proves a Duty much more.

Arg. 4. It is Shismatical Doctrine which would teach Men by parity of Reason to Renounce Communion with all Churches and Christians on Earth, or near all.

But such is that which would teach Men to Renounce Communion with all the Non-conformists and their Worshipping Assemblies.

The *major* is unquestionable.

The *minor* is proved. In that all or near all the Christians on Earth have as great Faults as the Non-conformists and their Assemblies. O that God would so bless the World, as to make all the Churches of the *Armenians*, *Abassians*, *Syrians*, *Georgians*, *Circassians*, *Greeks*, *Moscovites*, *Papists*, *Lutherans*, and all other Protestants, *&c.* but as knowing, sincere, faithful, obedient, *&c.* as those in *England* that you revile, cast out and prosecute.

L. *But Communion in Schism is unlawful: But you are accused of Schism, and so are your Assemblies.*

M. And

M. And the Church of *England* is a loudly accuſed of Schiſm and Hereſie by the *Papiſts*: and too much by the *Greeks*, if the Patriarch *Jeremy* ſpake their ſence Are they therefore Schiſmaticks indeed? None forwarder to accuſe, than the Ignorant or Guilty! Judge by what I have ſaid of our Judgment in my *Search for the Schiſmaticks*. VVe abhor Schiſm, and have laboured to have healed the wounds of the Church with all our power theſe twenty two years and more; And who be they that have reſiſted it, and hate the only healing Balſam.

2. It is not true that we muſt have Communion with no Church that is guilty of Schiſm, though we muſt not be guilty of Schiſm it ſelf. If the Schiſm be Apoſtaſy that cuts them off from Chriſt and the Church Univerſal, we muſt not have Chriſtian Communion with ſuch, that are no Chriſtians. But if they are only guilty of Schiſm from ſome particular Church, and of Schiſm *in* the Univerſal Church, and not *from it*, wounding and not diſmembring, we muſt not Renounce Communion with ſuch, ſave only as with any other ſcandalous ſins, ſo far as impenitence proveth ungodlineſs. The Church of *Corinth* was much guilty of Schiſm, and ſo was that of *Galatia*; and yet none were therefore to Renounce their Communion. VVas not *Peter* guilty of ſome Schiſm? *Gal.* 2. I doubt there are few Churches on Earth that are not herein guilty, either in *Eaſt*, *South*, *Weſt*, or *North*. And muſt we Renounce Communion with them all? That is, to commit ten-fold greater Schiſm for fear of Schiſm.

3. Read impartially my *Search for the Schiſmatick*, and if the Prelates thus mentioned be not far more guilty of Schiſm, than we are, I deſpair of ever underſtanding what Schiſm is. This would be the ſtrongeſt Argument for Separation from them: and is ſo uſed by many Separatiſts.

Chap. XLVII. Point IV. *Of obliging the Laity to live without any more benefit of Diſcipline than is in the publick Churches,*

M. IV. THE next part of *Lay-Conformity* is this: Chriſt, who inſtituted Miniſtry, VVord and Sacraments, hath alſo inſtituted a certain determinate Diſcipline in his Church, of great uſe to the Church, and to particular Souls: And this is conſiderable,

ſiderable, 1. As a Duty. 2. As a Benefit. And no Man hath authority, 1. To diſoblige us from a Duty of Chriſt's impoſing; 2. Or to deprive us of a Benefit of Chriſt's giving. But Conformity doth both theſe to the Laity in a great degree.

L. What mean you by that Diſcipline? I thought our Church had rather too ſharp Diſcipline? I hope you mean not the Geneva *Diſcipline, or the* Scots *Presbyteries and Stool of Repentance.*

M. I mean nothing but what was to the Matter, the Epiſcopal party write for as the Ordinance of Chriſt: The true exerciſe of the Keys, and the previous Acts. That is, That God hath made the Church to be as it were the porch of Heaven, a Society gathered out of the Infidle World, ſanctified to God, and prepared for Glory; and therefore he would have none in his Church, but ſuch as profeſs Faith, Love and Holineſs, and renounce a fleſhly, ſenſual, worldly and profane Life: And the Paſtors bear the Keys of Truſt and Government to judge of ſuch; that is, who are to be taken in, and who to be caſt out, and who to be admoniſhed and cured of ſcandalous Sins: And all the Members are bound to preſerve the purity of themſelves, and the Society in their places; And therefore if a Brother live ſcandalouſly, contrary to his profeſſion, his Neighbour that hath notice of it, is to tell him of his fault, and if he hear not, and repent not, to warn and admoniſh him before witneſſes: and if yet he repent not, to tell the Church; and if yet he repent not, and hear not the Church, he is to be avoided; as one that is not of their Communion. But if warning, Perſwaſion, Prayers and patience, bring him to Repentance, the Church is gladly to pronounce his forgiveneſs by God, and to receive him. This is the Diſcipline which Chriſt hath inſtituted, and the Chriſtian Churches have profeſſed.

L. *This calling Men to Repentance perſonally will but diſturb and diſtract the Pariſhes: Men will never endure it: And that's no duty that will do harm.*

M. They are not fit uot to be Communicants or Members of a Chriſtian Church that will not endure it. It is the Crime of the Church-Governours that they receive, yea, drive ſuch into the Church, as will not endure the Laws of Chriſt, and Church-Duties, and then caſt by ſuch Duties, becauſe Men will not endure them.

As if you took Scholars into a School that will not endure Government and Correction, or Soldiers into an Army that will not

endure Command and Discipline; and then omit it, and leave them to their wills, because they will not endure it. Or, as if you would take Servants that will not be Commanded, nor endure Labour, and then let them be masterless and idle, because they will not endure service. VVho allow'd you to take and keep such in Christ's Church, that will not endure either to live obediently, or be called to Repentance?

I confess that to let all Men alone in their sin, is the way to some kind of Peace in the Parish: But it is not Christ's Peace, but the Devils, by which he keeps possession of Souls and Countries, till Christ brake his peace, and cast him out; such peace will end in endless sorrow.

L. *What Reasons can you give for the necessity of such a sort of Discipline, and why it may not be forborn?*

M. 1. It is Christ's Law and Institution, and that is the same reason that we give for our Christianity it self.

L. *But I have read in* Erastus, Selden, Ludov. Moulin *and* Prin, *that Christ did but tell his Disciples how they should carry themselves under the* Jewish *Government, and use their* Sanedrims *or Judicatures, and did not institute any new sort of Church-Discipline.*

M. Christ's taking occasion from the *Jewish* Judicatures to institute his Discipline, doth no more prove that he did not obligatorily institute it, than his calling twelve Apostles according to the number of the Tribes, and his taking occasion from former practice, for Baptism, Ministry, Elders, *&c.* doth prove that he ordained no such things.

2. VVhat need Christ command his Disciples to use that *Jewish* Government which was in use before, and they could not avoid?

3 Christ knew that the *Jewish* Government was presently going down, and tells his Disciples that they should be judged and scourged as Malefactors in those Synagogues. And is it like then that he is calling them to exercise their discipline in those Synagogues.

4. If it were so, it will hold *à fortiore*, that if Christ during the *Jewish Policy* command them to use such a Discipline, much more in his own Churches.

L. *What are your other Reasons for it?*

M. 2. The very Nature of Christ's Church required it, which is a Society separated from the VVorld under special Laws of Holiness and love, and for special heavenly Ends: If therefore it

shall

ſhall be confounded with the World, and not ſeparated to Chriſt it is no Church.

3. Chriſt did it for the Honour of himſelf, and his Kingdom: If he be no more for Holineſs than the Infidel and Heathen World is, what is he better than they, or how is he a Saviour, or what is the Church better than Infidels?

4. It is needful to ſave Heathens from deceit that would come into the Church, and to convince them that their impure Communion is inſufficient.

5. It is needful to ſave Chriſtians from damning deceit, that they may not think that a dead, barren, unholy Faith and Name of Chriſtianity will ſave them, without a holy, obedient Heart and Life.

6. It is needful to keep Chriſt's Ordinances from falſifying profanation: If a ſealed Pardon and Gift of Life ſhall in the Sacraments be given, as commonly to Dogs as Children, it is a taking God's Name in vain, and profane belying Jeſus Chriſt.

7. It is needful to bring Sinners to Repentance, that they may be Pardoned and Saved.

8. And it is needful to the comforting abſolution of Penitents.

9. Accordingly God's Church in all Ages hath owned it as their Law of Chriſt's inſtitution, to this day.

L. *But ſome learned Men ſay. This was but becauſe there was at firſt no Chriſtian Magiſtrate: But when there was ſuch the Diſcipline fell into their hands.*

M. The firſt Chriſtian Magiſtrates finding the Church in Poſſeſſion of it, confirmed it, and too much accumulated and added to it; but took it not away.

Of this ſee a ſmall Book which I wrote of the Magiſtrates Power in Religion, to Dr. *Lud. Moulin*, which may end all this diſpute. Briefly, I ask you.

Qu. 1. Would you have all Infidels and Pagans baptized, and Communicate without any Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion firſt?

L. *God forbid: That's a Contradiction.*

M. Shall any words go for a Profeſſion, or what muſt that Profeſſion be?

L. *It muſt be a Profeſſion of Chriſtian Faith and Obedience.*

M. Who muſt try and judge of that Profeſſion, whether it be Chriſtianity or not: Is it Magiſtrates or Paſtors?

L. Magistrates have somewhat else to do: Else they must study and exercise that work alone; for they will have no time for Civil Government, if they undertake this.

M. Did not Christ institute an Office for it, and give them this Power of the Keyes? And if one half that Office cease as soon as Magistrates were Christians, why not the other half, and so Magistrates must Preach, Baptize, and celebrate the Sacrament.

L. It must be no doubt the Ministerial Office to judge who is fit to be in Church Communion: Else they were Slaves, if they must be forced to take all uncapable Men to their Charge and Communion against their Consciences and Will: No Physician, Tutor or School-Master, will be forced to take such Patients, Pupils or Scholars, as will not be ruled by him, and will make him do what they list, against his Will.

M. You must confess the use of discipline, or else openly disown the Word of God, the very Being of the Church, and the Judgement of the universal Church to this day. And do you think then that to deprive the Church of this is a lawful part of Conformity?

L. *How prove you that the Laity is deprived of it?*

M. 1. In our Great Parishes, the People are few of them know to the Priest or to one another. Of the two Parishes of my last abode, I do not think but there are Fifty thousand unknown to the Minister and to each other. And how can these admonish the Offenders, or the Minister exercise this discipline upon unknown persons?

2. The people know that is in vain to begin where there can be no progress. To what purpose is it to tell the Church, when it's sure to do more harm then good. 1. The swarm of the Vicious is so great, that they cannot be prosecuted. 2. The Minister himself forbeareth it as unpracticable. 3. The accused must be Prosecuted at rates which Men cannot bear. 4. And before Bishops, that cannot possible do this work to one of a Thousand, any more than one School-master can Try and corect all the faultty Scholars in a Dioceses 5. And Men must be judges that will Love, and Patience, but like Secular Courts, bid them Recant or be Excommunicate. 6. And the Cause must be decided by Lay-men that profanely usurp the power of the Keys. And how is Christ's discipline here possible? Polluted, common Churches frighten away the Religious conscionable People.

L. Do

L. *Do you not before complain of* too much *exercise of Dicipline by Excommunications*?

M. Yes, of Discipline against Christ: It is not enough for your Churches to be common and unclean without true Discipline, but when you should drive out the Dogs and Swine, you turne out the Children: Witness all the fore-mentioned Canons. As I said, you first force in all the ignorant ungodly multitude that are unfit; then these are the strength and *major* part: Then they cannot come under due Discipline; then this grieveth Religious People, and they find fault with it. And then they must be taken for Schismaticks, and condemn'd and ruin'd for finding fault.

In short, what need there disputing: Is it not notorious matter of fact that this Discipline is not exercised against one Drunkard, Swearer, Fornicator, *&c.* of a multitude? and are not Men then deprived of the use of it? And when it's known that they cannot have it in most or many Parishes, how are they bound to live and die without the benefit of it?

L. *Do you think Men are bound to separate from all Churches that have not this Discipline? Sure it is not Essential to the Church.*

M. I do not think that *Preaching*, as distinct from reading, is essential to a Church; but that it may be at least for a time a sorry Church; without it, as those in *Moscovy* are. But I would not continue in such a Church that is without it, if I can have a better. It's one thing what a Man should endure that can have no better without more hurt than good; and another thing what Men should chuse in obedience to Christ, and for their own and the Churches good that can attain it. Do you think it is lawful to omit all Duty that is not essential to the Church? surely your many humane Offices, your Formes and Ceremonies, your Declarations and Subscriptions to them, are further from being essential than true Discipline is, and yet you think that the omission of these is unsufferable: is mans accidental inventions more necessary than Christs Ordinance and Church Government?

L. *The Presbyterians call their Discipline the Kingdom of Christ, and feign their Government to be Christs.*

M. I speak for nothing proper to Presbyterians: For no Lay Elders, nor Synods that by Vote govern all the Churches of the Land, but only for that substance of Parish Discipline which all acknowledge, not resisting Appeals from abusive Ministers to Bishops or Magistrates. *Bucer* was no Adversary to moderate Episcopacy

copacy or Liturgies: Yet if you will read him *de Regno Dei, de Confirmat. &c.* to King *Edward* 6. for Pariſh Diſcipline, I ſhall need to ſay no more to you on this ſubject.

Chap. XLVIII. Point V. *The diſcountenancing the fear of ſin, and the practice of ſerious godlineſs.*

M. V. I will add next this aggravation which comprehendeth many parts of Conformity.

No true Chriſtian doubteth, but ſerioufneſs and diligence in ſerving God, and making our calling and Election ſure, and Obedience to Gods Law, and fear of ſinning, are of abſolute neceſſity to Salvation. And how greatly the Laity is diſcouraged and frightned from all this by the courſe of Conformity is notorious.

L. *Who doth diſcourage them? Do not all our Miniſters Preach for Obedience and Godlineſs? Doth not our Liturgy pray that the reſt of our lives hereafter may be pure and holy, that we may attain Eternal Life?*

M. Yes, and more than ſo, you read the Scripture which is all for holineſs: The deeper is the guilt of Hypocriſie and Malignity in them that ſeek to root it out: Out of their own mouths will they be judged, and beaten with many ſtripes. Judge by theſe inſtances.

1. How Children are Baptized with God-fathers, and how Confirmed after, and Admitted to Communion, and forced to it, I ſhewed before.

2. So many humane Inſtitutions are impoſed on Men as neceſſary to Communion, that he muſt be a Man of more Learning and Underſtanding that I have, or with all the ſtudy of my Life could obtain, who can diſcern them all to be Lawful: And he that calls any of them ſinful is Excommunicate *ipſo jure.*

3. It is certain that a great part of the Laity underſtand not the Creed, and thoſe few that ſet themſelves to ſeek for ſaving knowledge, attain ſo little in their ſecular courſe of Life, as that we muſt be glad if they underſtand all the Catechiſm, the Creed Lords prayer and Ten Commandments, and take ſuch for extraordinarily wiſe: And yet if one of theſe think a Form, a Ceremony, a Lay Chancellors Diſcipline, *&c.* to be repugnant to the VVord of God, and ſay it, he is Excommunicate. 4. By

4. By this it is absolutely necessary that the generality of men, even all *England* that know not more than I do, must blindly believe as the Canon and Priest bids them, barely on their VVord, or else they must falsly pretend to believe them, or be all liable to Excommunication. And so an implicite Faith in the Canon-Makers and Bishops is become the necessary Religion of the Land. And then if the Bishops turn we must all turn with them.

5. By this means wilful ignorance is made necessary. For it is a dangerous thing (as I have found it) to study for knowledge in Gods VVord, lest it should lead us to differ from something in the Canons, Liturgy or Bishops, and then we are liable to ruin. And so they that will be Church Members must take heed of studying Gods VVord, or searching after Truth.

5. If for thinking and saying any of the Impositions are amiss, they be once Excommunicated, or but noted as Dissenters, they are rendered odious to the Church-Courts and Priest, and by them to the credulous Obsequious Herd; and it's likely that in the Pulpit they will be proclaimed Hypocrites, Schismaticks, unquiet Spirits, Phanaticks, and in as much danger of Damnation as Murderers or Adulterers who are as safe as they.

6. By this means fear of sinning, and the danger of dissenting being so usually conjunct, the avoiding of sin is made Puritanism, and a suspicious sign, if not a common scorn.

7. By this means ignorant Youth is quite discouraged from serious piety and fear of sin, lest they fall under common scorn; and it's well if they follow not the multitude and be scorners of Obedience to God themselves. And the very plea of Conscience (which is but obeying God) is made a disgrace or mockery, and a *tender Conscience*, made equivalent with a self-conceited Schismatick.

8. It is no danger to meet by hundreds at a Play-house; or by great numbers at Taverns, Ale-houses, Coffee-houses, Horse-races, *&c.* But if few Nighbours meet to Pray or Excite each other in the Love of God and Heaven, you know what the danger is.

9. If any Minister will but leave Preaching the Gospel of Christ, and turn Physician, he may be quiet; tho' he be of the same judgement that he was before; the forbearing of his Ministry may Preserve his peace. There are now in this City ejected Ministers who have forsaken their Function, and are Doctors of Physick,

Phyſick, and they live in great Wealth and acceptance: There are phyſicians and Miniſters of the ſame judgement, and perhaps dwell together in the ſame Houſe (it was the caſe of Dr. *Micklethwait* and me.) The phyſician is honoured, and the Miniſter call'd and uſed as a Rogue, though they were of the ſame mind. There are ſome Nonconforming Miniſters, that tho' they are Doctors of phyſick, yet dare not ceaſe their Miniſtry, but practice both: Theſe are welcomed to the Sick, but the Healthful baniſh them or, hunt them away, not withſtanding their acceptance as phyſicians, the hatred of their preaching being more prevalent.

L. *Sure they Preach ſome dangerous Doctrine.*

M. Not a word of ſuch is charged on them, tho, malicious perſons come to hear them, and inform againſt them. Their writings tell the World their Doctrine. Dr. *Cifford* was one of them who hath written of the Covenants: Dr. *Gilpin* is one of them who hath written of Temtations, driven from *Newcaſtle.*

Some ejected Miniſters Educate their Sons to phyſick, and tho' they be of their Fathers mind, the Sons are highly eſteemed and honoured, and the Aged Fathers laid in Jayl: This laſt Week old Dr. *Grew* that is about 80 or 79 years of Age, and almoſt Blind, and hath lived there 36 years and more, (known by ſome writings) a Man of a calm, quiet, ſober peaceable Temper, was ſent to the common Jayl at *Conventry* for dwelling there, and ſome time exhorting his old Hearers to fear God; and he hath here a Son, and a Son-in-Law, Doctors of phyſick, deſervedly honored, who if they did but Preach the Goſpel might ſpeed as ill as he.

10. If an ejected Miniſter would but teach the Children of the Laity, tho' it were but to read, and tho' there be no other School-maſter near, the People muſt rather have their Children untaught, and muſt not be ſuffered to have ſo needful a help.

11. If a Miniſter would give over preaching, yet if his old Hearers deſire his Neighbour-hood, that they may have the benefit of his Conference, they muſt not enjoy it, leſt he whiſper Nonconformity to them, but he muſt be baniſhed five Miles not only from Corporations, but from every place where-ever he preached theſe twenty years. I know ſome ſuch who have travelled much abroad, who can hardly find a place in that part of *England* that is not within five Miles of a Corporation or ſome

place

place where they have Preached: And those few places have seldom any untenanted Houses: And if rarely such a House be found, it's like enough that the Landlord will have no such Tenant: Or if he would, it's ten to one the Minister is not able to take it and pay his Rent; besides his undoing in removal, and putting off his former House and goods.

11. If any one that feareth sinning by Conformity, be never so falsly accused, he usually accounteth it his Wisdom to suffer patiently whatever Men will say or do, without Self-defence: I saw two Warrants against a Lay-man this Week, which expres'd his Hearing two Ministers as Sworn by two poor Beggarly Women; when I can witness that both their Oaths were false, and that neither of those Ministers Preach't at the time and place that they Swore they Preached: For my House being at the next Door, I heard that it was not they that then Preached. But I suppose it's all one: They dare not question it.

I heard of one that said he would Swear Treason against a Nonconformist: and being ask'd, What he said, and whether ever he heard him speak? He said, No; but he heard him whistle Treason: And being ask'd, How whistling could be Treason? He said, That he whistled the same Tune that a Ballad was Sung in, that they said had Treasonable words in it.

13. In the mean time, let but Men be utterly void of Conscience and Fear of Sinning, and what can hinder them from Saying, Covenanting, Swearing, Doing, any think that is required of them in order to a Benefice, or to the Estimation of an obedient son of the Church. And then he can Preach down Nonconformists as intolerable Rogues.

And thus the Laity that will fear Sin, and search the Scriptures, and have a Faith of their own, must go through all these Discouragements, if they be not so unhappily happy, as to attain to assurance or belief that all the Impositions in Conformity are lawful.

Chap. XLIX. Point VI. *The Laity denied Baptism, who refuse the foresaid way of Godfathers, as it excludeth the Parents as unlawful.*

M. VI. I Hope you will not say it is lawful to be unchristened, or to have their Children unbaptized: And you cannot say it is lawful to obey the Canon and Rubrick about Godfathers, against ones Conscience.

L. An erroneous Conscience must be rectified.

M. Is it meerly at Command? can you do it? Or can any do it when they will? Their is no Man without Error: why do not all the Clergy rectifie their own judgment, and presently free themselves from Error? If you can teach them this Art of rectifying conscience, it's best do it before they go to the University, or before they spend much time and labour in study. How many years study, and reading might this Art save them? Presently rectifie all your erroneons opinions, and save the labour.

L. But when men have sufficient help, they are unexcusable if they go on in Error.

M. Then either no Man living hath sufficient help, or else all Men are unexcusable: For it's most certain that all Men go on in a multitude of Errors.

L. But every Error hindereth not Mens *right to Baptism.*

M. And do you think *this* doth? will you try now and prove to me that I may be unexcusable. 1. That Children have right to Baptism meerly upon the presentation of a Neighbour or Stranger that never owned them.

2. That it is not the parents Duty to dedicate them solemnly to Christ, and to be the Person (as having power of them) that must Covenant for them.

3. That it is lawful for Neighbours or Strangers, to undertake and Vow that for the Child's Education, which they are neither able to perform, nor ever intended it?

4. That it is lawful for parents either to give up their Children to such Sponsors for to Educate them, or to seek or accept such to Vow and Covenant, that which the parents know they never meant to do, and which if asked, [Do you seriously intend to do all this for my Child?] they will say, No: Is is lawful thus

to

to Suborn Men, and put them on so great a Sin? cure these Errors in me if you can.

L. I told you before that they may agree to speak as in your Name.

M. And I told you, so many do: but that's nothing to Conformity, it being none of the fence of the Church, as I proved.

Was this any of the conditions of Baptism of Christ's making? was this necessary when *Philip* said to the Eunuch, *If thou believe with all thy heart, thou mayst be baptized*? Or when *Paul* said, *Else were your Children unclean, but now are they holy*? 1 Cor. 7. 14.

L. But your Child shall not be unbaptized for this: The Church will constrain the Baptizing of it.

M. Whom will they constrain? 1. Not the Minister: He is not to Baptize it, unless it be brought and desired. 2. Not the Godfathers: For none can compel any to be a Godfather, nor ever do. 3. But it is the Parent that is compelled? How? Those that hold it lawful will do it without Compulsion, the Baptizing of their Child being desirable to them. But those that think it a Sin, will rather be Excommunicate and lie in Jail; and so they cannot compel them. And the *Anabaptists* Children are mostly unbaptized for all their Compulsion. But the usual way of Nonconformists is to elude the Canon, and to agree privately with the Godfathers to be but Witnesses or Seconds, and that the Parent himself will be there present, and when the Questions are put to the Godfathers, will shew his consent by bowing, tho' he may not speak.

But such shifts to avoid the Evil of Conformity, is no Justification of Conformity or the Canon, nor of any that will deny Baptism for an unnecessary if not an ungodly device of Man; and that when themselves seem to make Baptism necessary to Salvation; and do clearly make it a means that ascertaineth Salvation to Infants.

Chap. L. Point VII. *Of Denying* Baptism *to them that dare not submit to the use of the English Crossing.*

M. VII. WHat is said against our way of Crossing, as a dedicating Sign, and Badge of Christianity, if not a Humane Sacrament of the Covenant of Grace, I have said before, and must not repeat: And also what it is for Mi-

niſters to Aſſent and Conſent to reject all from Baptiſm that are not ſubmitted to it.

I am now only to tell you that this Submiſſion is a part of the Lay-conformity, for want of which they are puniſhed with the denial of Baptiſm.

L. But they that are againſt it may yet let the Miniſter uſe it on their Children : That's his act, and not theirs : and they cannot hinder him : They ſend their Children to be Baptized, and not to be Croſs'd.

M. But we have many *Antipædobaptiſts*, and converted *Jews* to be Baptized at Age.

2. And tho' I am much of your mind in this, yet all wiſer Men are not ; and the caſe is very difficult as to Infants : If one knew beforehand that the Prieſt would uſe Oil, and Spittle, and Exorciſm, and invocate Saints and Angels over the baptized Child, it were hard to ſay, I ſend him only to be Baptized] when he knew how ſinfully it will be done. The truth is, I can juſtifie no Man that will ſubmit his Child to ſuch a croſſing at Baptiſm, that can *cæteris paribus* have it by another better done, tho' Prohibited by Man : We muſt not be guilty of other Mens Sins, nor of Church Corruptions.

L. Chriſt that will have mercy and not ſacrifice, would not have men refuſe Chriſtendom for fear of a Croſs.

M. Chriſt who would have Teachers learn that Leſſon, *I will have mercy and not ſacrifice*, would have no Miniſter deny Chriſtendom to ſuch as think their croſſing ſinful : And yet he would have no Man commit any Sin, to gain Baptiſm : but will ſave the unbaptized that deſired it, ſo they might have had it without ; and will himſelf ſhew Mercy to ſuch as conſent not to a polluted Sacrifice. And would have us prefer a lawful way when we can have it. Baptiſm is our Renunciation of Sin.

CHAP.

CHAP. LI. POINT VIII.

Of Rejecting not-kneelers from Communion.

L. *AND well they deserve it that will not reverently receive so great a Gift upon their knees from God.*

M. Do you think it is for want of humble Reverence? Do they not kneel after and longer to God in Prayers publickly, and in their Families and Chambers, than most that blame them? Were Christ's Apostles unreverent that did not kneel at receiving it in his own visible presence? Was all the universal Church unreverent, that for 600 Yeares, if not 1000 after Christ forbad strictly all Adoration by kneeling every Lords Day, because they would use a *Laudatory Gesture* denoting their belief of Christs Resurrection? Do those men shew more Reverence to God and Religion, that will kneel at the Altar, and scarce ever kneel to God at home, and seldom use his Name but with prophanation? It is not unrevereence that causes their dissent.

L. I know no just cause they have of this dissent.

M. I confess, nor I, while the open Doctrine of the Church renounceth all Bread-worship and Idolatry: But were it among *Papists*, where the Doctrine expounds the action, I durst not do it.

But I told you before what moveth them, which I must not again repeat. But I will repeat it, that it is a heinous injury to the Church, and the particular Persons, that on the account of so small and doubtful a circumstance, wherein all antiquity is against the imposers; they should deny Communion with Christ and his Church as much as in them lieth to faithful Christians; and should turn the Sacrament of Love for no just cause, into and occasion of hatred and persecution; and the Sacrament of Unity, into an Engine of division, by their own needless impositions to perplex mens Consciences, and set people one against another: O what a snare and instrument of wrath and discord, and in humane usage of other men, do many turn that blessed Sacrament into, which is instituted for the Communion of Saints in unfeigned Love. The more such magnify the Sacrament as the very Flesh and Blood of Christ, the more do they condemn themselves.

CHAP.

CHAP. LII. POINT IX.

Of denying Lay-men *Communion in a Neighbour Parish Church, when they dare not Communicate in their own Parish, for the Reasons aforesaid.*

M. IX. DO you think it is a sin deserving exclusion from Christian Communion, for a man to think it unlawful for him to own and encourage the Ministry of an ignorant, insufficient, or grosly scandalous, or hurtful Teacher. A poor Christian that is unwilling to be damned, and readeth that he should love his Neighbour as himself; perhaps, heareth the Priest tell the Peple what hypocrites and odious persons *Non-conformists* are, and exhorts them to avoid such, and to prosecute them, and root them out as the intolerable enemies of Church and State, and as unfit to be Members of any Society: He is acquainted with divers *Non-conformists*, their Lives and their Books and Doctrines, and finds the clean contrary. He reads in Scripture, [*See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently,*] He heareth from the Pulpit, [*See that ye hate one another, and seek the destruction of one another,*] Christ saith, [*Love your enemies*] the Priest exhorts them [*to root out their friends*] Christ saith [*He that receiveth you, receiveth me: and shake off the dust of your Feet against, them that receive you not: It shall be easier for* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *than for such*] the Priest saith [*He that receiveth such Ministers, sinneth against Christ, and he that hath any Communion with them is a Schismatick,*] The man readeth, [*Beware of false Prophets; and thinks it a sin to encourage the teachers of lies and wickedness*] and he readeth [*He that hateth his Brother is a* Murderer, *and hath not eternal Life: and if I have not charity, I am but as sounding Brass, &c.*] He thinks him a false teacher, that contradicteth Christ, and that seeks to damn the hearers. And he thinks that no tongue can more contradict Christ than that which Preacheth down Love, and Preacheth for hating godly Men, tho' on slanderous pretences, and that no man can do more to damn the People, than he that draweth them from love, to such hatred.

Another liveth in a parish where a dry ignorant fellow affords him no such help as he is conscious his soul needeth, and where the Common-Prayer is so much better, than the Sermon, that

were

were it not for that, he might better ſtay at home. And where the Prieſts Converſation encourageth the Drunkards and prophane, and vilifieth godly Men.

This man is for the Church-way, but for a better Miniſter: The queſtion is, whether for this he be ſo great a ſinner that all neighbouring Miniſters muſt drive him away, and deny him Communion.

Another honeſt Chriſtian taketh it for a ſin to kneel at the Railes, or to join with the Organs, or to receive or deſire the Dioceſan manner of Confirmation, or to forbear Communion with all Chriſtians whom the Church-men here condemn or caſt out. The queſtion is, whether it be no wrong to any of theſe to be denied Communion at a neighbour Pariſh, where his doubts are removed?

I prove that he hath right to ſuch neighbour Communion.

1. Becauſe he is a Member of Chriſts Body, the Catholick Church, and therefore hath right to the Communion of Saints. And to believe that in the Creed, and condemn it in practice, is to believe to condemnation.

2. They themſelves teach that a true Chriſtian hath right to Communion with all Churches, where he hath juſt occaſion to ſeek it.

3. They ſay that there is no Church without a Biſhop, and that the Dioceſan-Church is the leaſt true political Church: And if ſo, he ſeparateth not from any Church that ſeparateth not from the Dioceſan.

4. Theſe foreſaid perſons do nothing to forfeit the Communion of neighbour Churches; therefore it is a ſin and wrong to deny it them. If it were proved an errour to avoid that as a ſin which they avoid, all mankind hath errours; and to be overfearful of Fire, or Water, or plague, or poyſon, is a tolerable ſafe weakneſs, and not like the ſins that ſwarm in multitudes of tolerated Pariſhioners.

L. That which is not ſo immoral, as Fornication, Drunkenneſs, Curſing and Swearing, may be more hurtful to the Church, and ſo deſerve greater ſeverity from Governours.

M. The Church Keys are to be uſed with due relation to Heaven, and thoſe are to be taken in, or caſt out, that Chriſt will take in, or caſt out from Heaven: And if you think he will damn an obedient godly Chriſtian for fearing to partake of the

ſin

ſin of wicked Prieſts, or for fearing to be poyſoned with love-killing Doctrine, or for fearing the vain Worſhip of mens traditions, rather than a prophane derider of Conſcience, and a filthy Fornicator, Drunkard or Blaſphemer; I ſhall not think it worth my labour to diſpute with you.

But men that take the Churches welfare to lie in the wealth and domination of ſuch as they, more than in the Holy Obedience, Conſcience, and Piety of the People, will object the ſame that you now do.

CHAP. LIII. POINT X.

Of Swearing never to endeavour any alteration of Government in the Church.

M. X. HOW far this extendeth objectively I before proved by. 1. The words of the Oaths. 2. The conſent of the Biſhops. 3. And the words of the ſeven Canons; and the *Et Cætera* Canon in 1640. ſo that there is no doubt of it.

2. How far it extendeth as to the perſons obliged, I before told you, and you may read; 1. In the *Corporation Act*, which impoſeth it on all Corporations. 2. In the *Veſtry Act*, which impoſeth it on all Church-Veſtries. 3. In the *Act of Uniformity*, which impoſeth the ſubſcription on all the Clergy. 4. In the *Oxford Act of Baniſhment*, which impoſeth the Oath on *Non-conformiſts*, and more. 5. In the *Militia Act*, which impoſeth it on all the Military Commanders, and Souldiers in the Land; ſo that you may well ſay, that it is a National Covenant or Oath.

3. What is amiſs in the Church-Government that needeth an amending alteration, I have ſo often told you, that I will not repeat it. Judge then what this Oath importeth.

L. It could never be the meaning of the Parliament, *that no man ſhall endeavour to amend the faults of any Officers, Courts or Actions; for they often amend their own Acts of Parliament; and they reſerve a Power in* King *and* Parliament, *to make alterations even in Church Governments: But that belongs not to the People, nor ſhould they endeavour it.*

M. 1. I hope you will not confound *Stated Offices*, and *Mens Exerciſe of them in Practice.* I grant that they do not bind us by Oath never to endeavour that Biſhops, and all the Officers of their

their Courts may be honeſt men, and ſlander, and injure no man againſt Law, *&c.* But it is the Offices, as here ſtated, that are made thus far unalterable, named in the Canon [*Arch-Biſhops, Biſhops, Deans, Arch-Deacons*, and *the reſt that bear Office therein.*]

2. I grant that the Law is made to bind none but Subjects: and that an altering power is reſerved to King and Parliament; But it doth not follow, that all the Subjects be not bound by it; Though *They* may Change Laws, yet *We* may not: And as you ſay, They ſuppoſe that it belongeth not to the People to endeavour it: Which We grant, as to any Rebellious, Seditious, or otherwiſe unlawful Endeavour: But whether God bind not all men in their own place and Calling, by Prayer, Conference, Elections of Officers, Petition, *&c.* to endeavour to amend all Crying, Dangerous, Common Sins, is a farther Queſtion.

L. They cannot mean to exclude Petitioning, for that is the Subjects Right, and is by them allowed with Reſtraints.

M. 1. It is meant in oppoſition to the *Scots* Covenant, which tyed men to oppoſe Popery Prelacy, and Schiſm, only in their ſeveral *Places* and *Callings.*

2. It is expres'd in the moſt univerſal terms, without the leaſt Exception, by men that knew how to ſpeak.

3. Reaſons were given in Parliament againſt any Limitation, and thoſe Reaſons carryed it.

4. They were Men that were wholly for the *Church of England*, whoſe Canon had before Excommunicated themſelves, and all men, that acculed any Office in the Church Government as ſinful. And they knew, that ſhould any of them, when the Parliament is riſen (yea, or there) ſo ſay, he is an Excommunicate Man.

6 It is moſt certain that they intended to bind all Subjects on whom theſe Oaths are impoſed, even from petitioning, or any other Endeavour of Alteration; though they allow petitioning in other Caſes; for they intended to fix and ſecure the Church-Government againſt all Alterations.

6. Therefore (as I ſaid before) they joined it with, yea, and ſet it before *State-Government* in all their Oaths and Covenants; And do you think in Conſcience, they left men at liberty to petition againſt Monarchy, or againſt the Life, or power,

or Honour of the King : Far be it from us to think ſo ill of them

I muſt profeſs to you that I do not think half ſo ill of well-order'd Monaſteries of Men or Women, as I do of our large Dioceſſes, or our Lay Excommunicators according to the Canons. And yet even in the Times of Popery, the Nation was not Sworn never to endeavour any alteration of Monaſteries.

If you would have all Corporations, Souldiers, Veſtries, Miniſters ſworn never to endeavour to cure the Sick, to relieve the Poor, to ſeek more wealth, to reform all Play-houſes, Alehouſes and Taverns, to Catechize their Families, *&c.* I would not join with you,

National Oaths and Covenants are Matters of great moment: We have deeply ſuffered by raſhneſs in ſuch already : And ſhould any of them prove falſe and wicked, and the Nation be ſtigmatized with Perjury, you might more ſadly write, *Lord have Mercy on us*, on the Land, than on the Doors where the moſt dreadful Plague prevaileth.

CHAP. LIV. POINT XI.

Of Swearing an Abhorrence of taking Arms againſt any Commiſſionated by the KING.

M. THis alſo I have ſaid enough of in the Caſe of the XI. Miniſters, and told you that we are far from ſcrupling it in Diſloyalty ; but in Loyalty, only, 1. Leſt the Keepers of the Seals may by Commiſſions depoſe the King, or deliver up the Kingdom to whom they pleaſe. 2. Becauſe the Authority of a Commiſſion, as above, and againſt the King's own Law, is not a matter that Lawyers and Judges themſelves are agreed of, and therefore unfit for the unskilful Vulgar to determine by their Oath.

L. *The end is but to ſecure your Loyalty.*

M. The End is one thing, and the Means another : We are ready to give better ſecurity of our Loyalty than this which I before intimated to you.

Do you think in your Conſcience that all the Souldiers in *England*, and all the Corporation-Officers, and entruſted Perſons, and all the Veſtry-men, and all the Miniſters are ſo well skil'd

in

in Politicks and Law, above Biſhop *Bilſon*, *Grotius*, *Barclay*, and all the Tribes of Learned Lawyers, Caſuiſts, Canoniſts, Philoſophers, *&c.* before named, as that they can take ſuch an Oath in *Truth*, *Judgement*, and *Righteouſneſs*? Swearing Allegiance, and renouncing Rebelion, is eaſily known to be every Subjects Duty. But to untye knotty Controverſies in Law, is ſure above every vulgar Brain.

Why was not this way found out prevent all the Civil Wars in the days of the two *Willians*, of *Stephen*, of *Henry* the *1ſt.* and *3d.* of K. *John*, of *Edward 2d.* of *Richard 2d.* of *Henry 4th.* and *Edward 4th.* and *Henry 6th.* and *Richard 3d.* and to prevent the Inſurrections in the days of *Q. Mary*, and *Q. Elizabeth*? Why do they not this way decide all the Controverſies at *Liege*, *Colen*, &c. to make the People determine them by Oath?

All Politicks agree that the Difference between near Subjects and Slaves, is, that the former have propriety which none can take from them, but by their Conſent, at leaſt in thir Wives, Children, and Lives; and that Slaves have none ſuch, nor may reſiſt a Commiſſion to take them away, though cauſleſly, and Laws are there but the Will of the Lord, who may croſs them at his pleaſure: and that a Ruler of Subjects, and an *Owner* of Slaves thus differ. Now if it be a Controverſy, Whether the *Engliſh* be meer Subjects or Slaves, the ignorant Vulgar are no fit Judges to decide it, and that by Oath?

CHAP. LV. POINT XII.

Whether all Truſted in Corporations may declare, That there is NO OBLIGATION on them or any other Perſons from the Oath called, The League and Covenant.

M. XII. I Spake to this before but a little on the by; it being no part of the Miniſterial Conformity. Miniſters are only to ſubſcribe, or ſwear, that the ſaid Oath bindeth no man to endeavour any Alteration of Government; but the Corporations are to declare, That *there is no Obligation at all, from that Oath on them, or any other.* I have read much of the Hiſtory of *Heathens*, *Mahometans*, and *Chriſtians*; and I confeſs, I remember not that ever I read the like to this. The likeſt to it that I

remember, was in the long Wars and Contentions between the Pope and the *German* Emperour, when they ſware and unſware, and ſware again, as either Party got advantage: And that Popes and Councils have Decreed the diſſolving of Oaths of Fidelity to thoſe Kings whom the Pope Excommunicates, is Commonly known; but Proteſtants know no ſuch power.

L. *This Declaration is to be expounded by the many following Acts which only ſay, there is no obligation to Change the Government.*

M. That's *gratis dictum* without proof; that ſeveral Acts have the ſame meaning when the words ſo much differ, is not to be preſumed. One of them is an Univerſal Negative without the leaſt exception, and the other a *particular Negative* only. 2. And the Acts were made at ſeveral times, to ſeveral men, and the Parliament in the latter, never pretended to limit or explain the former, which ſure they would have done if they repented of the Terms. 3. And Parliament Men tell us, That it was mentioned that the Non-Obligation of the Covenant ſhould be limited, and it was pleaded againſt it, That if men believe that they are bound by it to any thing, ſome will think that they are bound to all that is lawful, and that it's lawful to take Arms againſt the King, and ſo there is no ſecuring them from Rebellion, as by that Covenant, but by renouncing all its Obligation: And this carried the Cauſe. 4. It is not lawful for Subjects to put a particular Sence on Univerſal Words impoſed, unleſs the impoſers firſt ſo expound the Terms; which they have refuſed to do after twenty years complaint of the Diſſenters, and do juſtifie the univerſal ſence to this day. Therefore ſuch forced Expoſitions of our Rulers words in ſo tremendous a matter, are not to be feigned without good proof.

L. *We ſay* Bonum eſt ex Cauſis integris: *There is* Evil *in that Covenant, therefore it is an Evil Covenant.*

M. That's none of the Queſtion; it may be Evil in that part that is Evil, and the thing it ſelf may thence be denominated Faulty or Evil, and yet not all that is in it be Evil, nor it Evil *ſimpliciter* but *ſecundum quid.* Do yon think all is Evil that is there Vowed?

L. *If it Evil, no one is bound to keep it.*

M. No,

M. No, not in the Evil part: But do you think that the conjunction of some Ill things in a Vow or Covenant, doth disoblige a man from all that's good in it? If so, mark what will follow.

1. Man is so ignorant, and imperfect, and faulty, that he doth nothing that's good without a mixture of some evil, how can sinless perfection come from sinful Imperfection? And so we should be bound by no Vow, or Oath, or Contract at all.

2. If Knaves once learn this Lesson, they will be sure to foist in some ill clause into their Vows to GOD, and their Covenants with Man; that so they may be bound by none.

3. The Oath of Allegiance or Fedelity to the King, and the King's own Oath at his Coronation, in the time of Popery, had ill clauses in it for the Papal interest, doth it follow that neither of them did bind?

4. If an *Irish* Tory should, on the high-way, meet an *English* Lord, and take his Purse, pretend that he is against the King, and should force him at once to take an Oath to be true to the King, and to give him his Estate, and conceal his theft: The latter is evil, and yet even that Oath bindeth to be true to the King.

5. If the Clergy in their Ordination, in time of Popery, had divers sinful clauses and promises, doth it follow that their Ordination was null, and obliged them to no Ministerial Duty?

6. If the Clergy in former ages, or in *France* or *Spain*, be sworn to the King and the Pope, doth it follow that this binds them not to the King, because it binds them not to the Pope?

7. If men were Married in time of Popery, with unlawful Words and Clauses, or lately in *England* by Justices in new terms, was such marriage null?

8. If a Papist make to you a Testament, or Deed of Sale of his Estate, and put in some unlawful clauses appealing to Angels, or wishing you to pray for the Souls in *Purgatory*; I do not think you would take that *Will* or *Deed* for a nullity.

9. If in Popery or here, some Clauses at Baptism prove bad, it doth not nullifie the Baptismal Vow.

10. If

10. If the King's Souldiers at once ſwear to fight for the King, and to deſtroy or plunder ſome innocent men ; or the Papiſt Souldier ſhould ſwear to be true to the King, and to pull down the Proteſtant Miniſtry and Biſhops ; the former Part binds them, though the latter doth not.

L. And Oath unlawfully impoſed binds no man.

M. That's only the Doctrine of perjury, contrary, to all ſober Chriſtians Caſuiſts. An unlawful impoſition that is made by an Uſurper without true power, binds no man to take the Oath impoſed ; but if he take it without being bound to take it, the Oath binds him to the lawful part of the matter.

1. If a High way Robber make me ſwear to be true to the King, that Oath binds, though he had no Authority to impoſe it on me.

2. If an Uſurping Miniſter Baptize a man, and make him vow himſelf to Chriſt, his Vow binds him, though the Uſurper had no authority.

3. If a man make many voluntary Vows, which no man bound him to make, he is bound to keep them if the matter be lawful. And the want of authority in the impoſer doth but leave you as a volunteer unobliged to take it.

4. And I would not have a Popiſh Clergy tempted to ſay, The King and Parliament had no authority to impoſe the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy on us without the Pope ; therefore we be bound to keep them.

L. *But the Covenant was forced, and no man is bound by a Promiſe or Oath which he was forced to make.*

M. That's a Doctrine of groſs perjury : It's true that no man that without authority forceth another to promiſe any thing to him, can lay any juſt claim to that which he forced a man to promiſe : For no mans own Crime can give him right to a Commodity ; *Nemini debetur Commodum ex propria culpa*, and the promiſer is not bound to give it him, becauſe he hath no right to receive it ; but if you be injuriouſly forced to promiſe or vow your Duty to GOD, or the King, or your Neighbour, that vow and promiſe doth bind you to perform it.

1. If it be done without right by Prince or prelats that force men to be Baptized, yet that forced Vow doth bind them.

2. If Biſhops unjuſtly force unfit men to the LORD's Supper, their Vow there made obligeth them.

3. As

3. As I ſaid, if a High-way Robber force you to ſwear to be true to the King, or to reſtore ill gotten goods, or to recant a ſlander, that Oath doth bind you.

4. If the King ſhould juſtly force you to Marry a Woman, the Covenant binds you.

The Reaſon is, becauſe man hath free will, and doth all that he doth by that choice, which is true freedom. It's no proper force of his will that moveth him, though we call it force from anothers Act, who doth his beſt to force him; a man may refuſe though he die for it. He that caſteth his goods into the Sea to ſave the Ship, is urged to it, but may chooſe. He that giveth a Theif his purſe to ſave his life, might have choſen. Do not the Martyrs freely lay down their lives? and if any deny Chriſt or his cauſe to ſave his life, and ſay I was forced, that will not ſave his Soul.

5. And your Doctrine will ſet up all unfaithfulneſs and rebellion. All men that under Penalties are commanded to ſwear Allegiance, or to take this Corporation-Oath, or the Militia-Oath, or the Oath to the Biſhops, are hereby taught to ſay, *We were forced to it by the King and Prelates, and did it all againſt our wills, and therefore are not bound by it.* Such principles looſe the bonds of all Societies, Loyalty and humane Converſe; and married men will put away their Wives when they are weary of them, and ſay, I was forced againſt my will by my Parents, or by Poverty, *&c.*

L. But this Covenant was unlawfully taken, as well as unlawfully impoſed, and therefore bindeth not.

M. This alſo is pernicious Doctrine againſt all ſober Caſuiſts. If the matter be good, the cauſeleſs and unlawful act of taking it, doth not nullifie the obligation to perform it. He that voweth an indifferent act, ſhould not have done it; for a vow muſt not be cauſeleſs; but he muſt keep it when it is made.

He that ſinned in marriage when he ought not, yet muſt perform his marriage Covenant.

He that in meer hypocriſie maketh the Baptiſmal vow, did ſin and yet is bound to keep it.

The truth is, wicked men have ſo much of ill principles and ill ends, that they do all ſinfully that they do oft as to the ſubſtance, and ever as to the manner: But they are not diſobliged from

from all their Contracts and Vows, because they sinfully made them. Else they will purposely do all sinfully, that they may not be obliged.

So that, 1. If the Act of imposition. 2. The Act of *Swearing*. 3. And part of the matter Sworn, be all unlawful; yet a man is obliged to that part of the matter that is lawful. But part of the Vow in question was good.

L. What part of it was good as to the matter?

M. 1. The renouncing of popery. 2. And of Schism. 3. And of prophaneness 4. The Obligation to defend the King. 5. The profession to Repent of sin, *&c.*

L. But all this we are bound to otherwise before.

M. Then you confess that it is good; and then the Vow in question binds us to it. I hope you are not so ignorant as to think that a Vow binds not a man to do that which he is bound to before, I told you before, tho' a man be bound by his Vow in Baptism to Christ, his renewing it at every Sacrament layeth more and more Obligation on him. If a man have taken the Oath of Allegiance, every time he taketh it, he is again bound to the same thing. One may have a thousand Obligations to one and the same Duty.

L. But one thing is unanswerable: No, man is bound by a Vow that had not a self-obliging power: But the Subjects of England *and* Scotland, *had no self-obliging power to take that Covenant, because the King was against it. The* 30. *of* Levit. *proveth this at large.*

M. Indeed if the Act of Vowing were not only sinful but a meer nullity, that Vow being no Vow, could not bind: But that *Levit.* 30. doth no whit prove this, I have fully manifested in my *Christian Directory* in the *chap.* of Vows, to which I referr you, *part.* 3. *cap.* 5. Where the whole case of Vows is so largly opened, that I will here only say this little.

The text of *Levit.* 30. doth expresly speak only of Women, that are in a parents or Husbands house, and only of Vows made freely to God; of doing or offering something to him: Yea it seemeth limitted to them, of which many reasons may be given. And many reasons I have their mentioned. *pag.* 33. why it doth not extend to Princes and Magistrates for releasing their Subjects from their Vows, tho' some pretend a parity of reason. But these things are certain.

1. That

1. That even the Parents make not the vow null at its first making, but only relax it after, and stop the confirmation of it, *vers.* 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12.

2. That this Power is about vows to God, as good or hurtful to the inferiours; and that some Vows are so certainly necessary to the inferiours good, that the Father or Husband (whose Power is only for their good, and not their hurt) cannot dispence with it. As Doctor *Sanderson*, saith *Prælect* 4. Section 5 *Page* 102, 105. it belonging only to that matter in which one is under another Government, which hath Section 6. a double limitation, *One in the Person of the Swearer*, viz. *There is scarce any one that hath the use of Reason, that is so fully under anothers Power, but that in some things he is* sui Juris. *And there every man may do as pleases himself, without consulting his Superiour, so as that by his own Act, without his Superiours Licence, he may bind himself.* 2. *As to the consent of a Superiour* —— a tacit consent antecedent *or* consequent suffices —— *Quasi diceret, si dissensum suum vel uno die dissimulet votum in perpetuum stal. livit.*

And it is certain that to *oppose Prophaneness*, *Schism*, and *Popery*, and to *Repent of sin*, are things so necessary, and so much for every Persons good, that no Parent or Husband can either forbid or nullify such a vow: No Man can hinder any from vowing in Baptism to be a Christian, and to forbear Murder, Adultery, Theft, Idolatry, *&c.* nor can disoblige them after.

It is certain, that if a Superiour dissent, and after consent, or he die, and the next Superiour (*e. g.* a Husband) to consent when a Woman makes the same vow, it remaineth Obligatory.

And it is certain that if a Parent or Husband make the same vow himself, he cannot disoblige himself. And if once he consent, he can never after nullifie it.

And as to our case *de Facto* it is agreed, 1. That Parliament-Men took and imposed this Oath, when they were neither constrained, nor acknowledged the Kings Power to dissolve it.

2. That thousands in the Nation knew not of the Kings published Profession against it.

3. That thousands, yea the far greatest uumber in *England*, took it after the Death of the King.

4. That they thought the present King took it himself, and owned it by a Declaration; in which, though for my part I doubt

not but the *Scots* sinfully abused him and the Kingdom: yet that alters not the case of the Subjects obligation by that Vow.

5. That multitudes of Lords, Knights, and others took it that had adhered to the King in his Wars: All which undoubtedly puts it out of the case of dissolution in *Levit.* 30.

Besides, the common *Protestant* Doctrine is, that neither Popes, Princes or Prelates, can dispence with vows made in *re necessaria.* Could Kings disoblige all their Subjects from their Oaths and Vows, it would make a great change in the Religion, Morality, and Commerce of the World: So that hitherto we have no satisfaction.

L. *But this was a League and Covenant between man and man, who are dead or changed, and not a Vow to God, as you pretend; on which you lay the stress of the Obligation.*

M. I have nothing to do with it as a League of men, to do any action towards each other; but only as a Vow to God, and Covenant of Duty to God: And though the name of a Vow be not in it, I think him not worth the disputing with, that on deliberation denieth it to be a Vow to God. Whom think you else, do men make these promises to, of Repentance and Reformation, and opposing Prophaneness, *&c.* The words signifie as solemn a Vowing, as can well be made by words.

L. *You would make all the Corporations of* England *constituted by the grossest Perjury that men can be guilty of, even by disobliging or justifying themselves, and all others in Three Kingdoms whom they never saw, in the violating of a Vow against Heresy, Schism, Popery, and Prophaneness, and Impenitence: When as you know that our Clergy cry down Schism every day.*

M. I leave all men to answer for their own actions: I only tell you why the *Dissenters* dare not take these Oaths: I meddle not with other men. And you know a man that saith, *This Vow binds not*, may yet hold that something else binds us against the same thing. But if I were for Schism, and should argue from this Topick of the non-obligation of the Vow, I know not how you could answer me.

L. *Let us try, What is your Argument?*

M. That which is no sin, is not to be avoided as sin.

Schism is no sin.

Ergo, Schism is not to be avoided as sin.

Remember that I do but plead their principles.

L. *I deny the minor.*

M. That

M. That which a man vowing to avoid it, is it not by that vow bound to avoid, is no sin.

But Schism (and so Prophaneness, and Popery) is that which a man vowing to avoid it, is not bound by that vow to avoid.

Ergo, Schism is no sin.

L. *I deny both major and minor, and first the major.*

M. A vow to avoid sin always bindeth.

Ergo, That is no sin which a man vowing to avoid, is not thereby bound to avoid: *est & non est* are contradictory Terms.

L. *I deny the major, and distinguish, a Lawful Vow to avoid sin ever bindeth, an unlawful one doth not.*

M. *Unlawfulness* is, 1. In the Act of Swearing. 2. In the Act of Imposing. 3. In the Matter Sworn. An Oath unlawfully *Imposed* and *Taken*, bindeth to a *Lawful matter*. But for an Oath against sin to be *materially unlawful*, is a contradiction: For to be *sin*, and to be *unlawful*, is all one.

L. *I deny that a Vow against Schism binds not.*

M. The vow called the *Covenant*, bindeth no man.

The vow called the *Covenant*, is a vow against Schism (Prophaneness, and Popery.)

Ergo, A vow against Schism, (Prophaneness and Popery) binds not.

L. *You argue*, à particulari: *Though this Vow do not, another may.*

M. I argue *ab essentia particularis ad communem essentiam.* If this vow have all that is essential to a vow, and yet binds not, then no vow as such essentially doth bind. If the *anima hujus bovis vel ovis*, be not *anima rationalis*, and yet have all that is essential to the *anima brutorum*, then it is not essential to any *anima bruti* to be rational: And it cannor be accidentally so here. If the vow against Schism and Prophaneness have all essential to a vow, and yet bind not, then no vow bindeth *qua talis* as a vow. And if vows bind only by accident, or by something else that's an adjunct, that's nothing for their own essential obligation.

And so much of the *Corporation-Declaration.*

CHAP.

CHAP. LVI. *Of many agreed Tremendous Circumstances and Principles which affright many from* Conformity.

M. THere are also many general and collateral and circumstantial considerations that make Men fear the guilt of Conformity the more.

L. *What are those? I believe you will find as many of that sort of Reasons on the other side to move you to Conform, if you consider them.*

M. I will tell you what I mean, and then I will hear all that you have to say for it.

I. We are all agreed that no sin must be done for any commodity, or on any pretence of good.

II. We are agreed that to pretend Gods Service, or Name for our sin is a heinous aggravation: To say, I must do evil to please God, to Preach and to win Souls, is Prophaneness and Hypocrisy.

III. We are agreed that it is worse in a Minister of Christ than in others; because he is bound to be an example to the Flock, who are apt to imitate him.

IV. It is granted that God is jealous about his Worship, and that the prophaning of Holy things, and sinning openly in the Sacred Assemblies is, *cæteris paribus*, worse than meer miscarriages in our Conversation.

V. Lying is by most acknowledged a great sin, as overthrowing Humane credit and converse: But especially in a Preacher, because it will tempt Men never to believe him: And to say that we assent and consent, and that *ex animo* when we do not, is heinous Lying.

VI. It is granted that Man hath not a despotical power of his own understanding, to believe what he will: And that if any of his Errors be vicious, Vice and Error must have better cure than meer commands: And if Men could know and believe what they will, they should will to believe nothing but what hath credible evidence, without a carnal bias.

VII. It is agreed that all Men have Error, and therefore that Erring Men or no Men must be tolerated in our Communion; and he that thinks otherwise, condemneth himself, and teacheth all Men to condemn him.

VIII. It

VIII. It is granted that it is a very low degree of Knowledge that the Univerſality of vulgar Chriſtians do attain, who hardly learn the common Catechiſm, much leſs can it be expected that they ſhould all be able to underſtand all indifferent things to be indifferent, and to be Judges of the *minutiſsima*.

IX. If any errors be tolerable, it's like to be the errors about things indifferent and ſmall.

X. St. *Paul* hath expreſly determined the Controverſy about loving and receiving ſuch, *Rom.* 14. & 15.

XI. To encourage by compliance a generation and deſign of Men that overthrow Chriſt's and his Apoſtles Rule of Communion, and by invented Impoſitions of their own, would make Church-Concord impoſſible, and would propagate this way of certain Schiſm, and ſtabliſh it in the World, is to confederate for tearing the Church of Chriſt, and making Schiſm common and uncurable.

XII. It is granted, that he that after his greateſt Study is perſwaded that unneceſſary Oaths, Subſcriptions, Covenants, Ceremonies are ſinful; is condemned if he go againſt his Conſcience, though he ſhould miſtake.

XIII. Thoſe therefore that make ſuch ſnares for Souls, and then tell us, [*If you go againſt your Conſciences you are Damned for that, and if you do not, you are Damned as Schiſmaticks, for diſobeying us*] are far unlike the Miniſters of Chriſt, or Men that help to ſave our Souls.

XIV. We Non-conformiſts, offer our ſolemn Oaths that we have by Prayer and earneſt ſearch and ſtudy, laboured to know the truth herein: And as our Worldly Intereſt would perſwade us to conform, ſo we would readily do it, did we not believe that it is ſin againſt God: Yea, we take it (as to us) to be no ſmall but heinous ſin, by the aggravations which I am mentioning.

XV. Seeing then the way of our Condemners is either to caſt all Chriſtians out of the Church, that have not a greater degree of Knowledge herein, than I have, and all Men of my Rank, or elſe to bring all Men implicitly to believe all to be lawful that is commanded them, we cannot conſent to either of theſe two Meaſures for the Church.

XVI. It is agreed, That Perjury is ſo heinous a ſin, as that few are greater: It ſo taketh God's Name in vain, as to engage

gage his Juſtice in a ſpecial Revenge. It depriveth Kings of due ſecurity for their Lives and Crowns, by the Oath of Fidelity. It deſtroyeth all Truſt, and conſequently all Commerce among men; as well as all Hope of publick Juſtice: It expoſeth the Eſtates and Lives of all men to the will of perjur'd men; ſo that he that dare be perjur'd, may be ſuppoſed liable to any other Wickedneſs how great ſoever. Therefore if we Miniſters ſhould be perjured; we ſhould make our ſelves utterly unmeet for our Office.

XVII. It is agreed that to ſin *deliberately by a Covenant under our Hands*, is one of the moſt heinous ſorts of ſinning; and if it be done knowingly, ſheweth the perſon to be a willful Servant of ſin. To ſin by the *ſudden ſurprize* of a *Paſſion* is to bad; but to *ſtudy it*, *reſolve it*, and *covenant it*, is moſt dangerous: To engage a mans ſelf by *Covenant* to be once a Month drunk, or ſteal, or commit Fornication, is far worſe than the bare act.

XVIII. It is granted that *Repentance* is the condition of *Forgiveneſs*, and for man to Swear or Covenaut that *he will never Repent*, or *endeavour to amend*, or alter any thing that is amiſs, is to renounce Forgiveneſs.

XIX. It is granted that *publick*, *common*, *national ſins*, are far worſe than *private* and *perſonal*, in few; and if *heinous*, they are Prognoſticks of the foreſt Judgments; and to promote them, is to be the Enemy of the Land.

XX. It is granted that if that prove *Perjury*, which ſome Diſſenters fear is ſuch, and the Kingdom ſhould be ſtigmatized by it, there could ſcarce be any greater Shame and Danger befall the Land, to make it odious to *GOD* and Men, and Recorded as ſuch to all Generations. As I ſaid, The *Oaths* and *Covenants* to *endeavour* no *Alteration* in *Church Government*, is impoſed on all *Corporations*, all *Souldiers* in the *Militia*, all *Veſteries*, all *Non-conformiſt Miniſters* that will take it, and all Miniſters as to Covenant in the Act of Uniformity: And he that (without accuſing others) only ſtudieth to be innocent of ſo Mortal a (feared) Guilt, ſure is therein excuſable, if the fear of God, and the love of our Souls, and of the Church and State, be not an unexcuſable Crime. Apply this no farther than I apply it.

XXI. There

XXI. There is so much written for a Foreign *Jurisdiction* over *England*, in Church Affairs, by Arch-Bishop *Laud*, Arch-Bishop *Bromhall*, Dr. *Heylin*, Mr. *Thorndike*, Dr. *Saywell*, Bishop *Gunning*'s Chaplain (and many others) whose words I am ready to produce) as may assure us that it is in the same mens thoughts to introduce it as the only way to Concord, and that they therefore desire the Ejection and Ruine of such as we, because we are against it. And how far, and how soon God will let these men prevail, we know not: But we are past doubt, that to subject a Nation to a *Foreign Jurisdiction*, is to *stigmatize* it with the most *odious Perjury*: Seeing as the *OATH of Supremacy* Sweareth all expresly against it, so the aforesaid *Corporation Oath*, *Vestry-Oath*, *Militia-Oath*, *Oxford-Oath*, and *Uniformity Subscription*, have Sworn or Engaged the Nation *never to endeavour any Alteration of Government*, *in Church or State*: And if a *Foreign Jurisdiction* be *no Alteration*, we know nothing capable of that Name. And when we see some of the same men at once endeavour to make us *Take such OATHS* on pain of Ruine, and to design to bring all under the *Guilt of breaking them*, when we have done, men think it best to take no more of them than is necessary, till they see whether they must be kept or broken.

XXII. *P*lagues, Flames, *P*overty, Convulsions that have befaln Corporations of late years, makes us the more afraid of the sins which are like to be the Cause: And the Earl of *Argyl*'s Case makes us afraid of stretching Expositions of Oaths: And the *Londoners* have sped so ill by such stretching Expositions, as confirmeth us in our purpose to avoid them.

XXIII. If we wilfully sin on pretence of Liberty to preach the Gospel, we cannot expect God's Blessing on our Labours: And then what is our preaching worth?

XXIV. We read how joyfully many Martyrs in Queen *Mary*'s days endured the Flames, rather than grant the *Real Presence in the Mass*: and we that fear far greater sin, must rather suffer than commit them.

XXV. As we dare not *Conform against Conscience*, so to *lay by our Ministry while we can Exercise it*, we take to be *Sacriledge*, *Covenant-breaking* with God, and Treachery and Cruelty to the Souls of Men.

XXVI. We

XXVI. We are sure if all the Ministers should Conform, it would be so far from healing the Church, that it would widen the Breach: For the Dissenting people would be tempted to go the further from us all, and think that none of us were to be trusted; as many have turn'd further already on some such Accounts.

XXVII. We are commonly agreed, That *no man have right from God to Silence all the Ministers in the Land:* And we are fully satisfied, that Conformity to the things aforesaid *being a sin*, all the Ministers in *England* ought to have been *Non-conformists*, and then the Act of Uniformity had silenced them all.

XXVIII. Lastly, The dreadful effects of Canonical, and the like Impositions, the sufferings of Godly Ministers, Congregations, Cities, Countries, and Persons thereupon; our doleful Divisions, especially among Ministers, the evil Spirit that possesseth multitudes to cry down Love, and call for Vengeance, and the prospect of what is going on, do affright us from approving, consenting to, or using the Engines that thus divide us, and the Canons that are battering down our Peace, and consequently of all the Atheism, Prophaneness, Malignity, Popery, Persecution and Calamity to this Land, which are like to come in at the Breach of our Walls, which the Battery of those Cannons and Engines make. A Goal, and a Fire, or a Gallows is an easier place, than a Bed, where Conscience shall charge such Evils home upon us; much more than the Judgments which the True and Righteous Judge of the World will shortly execute on Lyers, Malignants, or Persecutors of his Flock; yea, of the least of those that Christ will call Brethren at that day.

I have oft said, if any Church-History of one Man be credible, St. *Martin* wrought many Miracles; and when the Bishops about him being bad Men, to get down the *Priscillian* Gnosticks (worse than our *Quakers*) did, 1. Seek help of the Magistrate's Sword; 2. And bring strict Godly persons under suspicion of being *Priscillianists*; *Martin* renounced their Communion by resolved separation to his death; save that once at the Emperour's desire, he Communicated with them on condition the Emperour would spare the lives of some condemned as *Priscillianists*; and even for this was rebuked and chastised by an Angel, if his Scholar and Companion *Sulpitius Severus*, a Learned Godly Man, be to be believed.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVII. *Of the Reason for Conformity.*

L. *NOW I will tell you what I here said against your Non conformity, and I will give you leave to answer the* Objections *as we go on.*

L. Obj I. *It's commonly said, that you are* Fanatick *Persons that build all your dissent on your private Spirits, and pretended Impulses and Inspirations.*

M. Have I pleaded with you any such *Impulses* or *Inspirations*, as the Reasons of our Dissent? Is there any such thing in above 100 Books that I have Written? Did we use any such Argument in our Dispute with the Bishops? But the Papists call every Mans *Faith* that is his *Own*, and not taken meerly on trust as the *Churches Faith*, by the name of a *Private Spirit*.

L. Obj II. *They say you make a Schism and Stir for meer trifles and things indifferent*, viz. *Ceremonies and Liturgy*; *confessing that they are not unlawful.*

M. 1. And what if they say that we are *Turks* or *Heathens* or have Horns and are Brutes, what Remedy have we? To their Honour be it spoken, we would not hope to Confute them.

2. Do you not know that so far are we from this, that even under the *old easier Impositions*, we protested to the Bishops in our *Petitions of Peace*, *That we would yield to any thing but sin against God*, and we endeavoured to *prove Conformity sinful*? And do they well agree with themselves, when Doctor *Stillingfleet* saith, that I would represent Conformity such as should make them seem a company of *Perjur'd Villains*?

3. I pray you tell me, whether the 52 Points now opened by me, be nothing but *Liturgy* and *Ceremonies*, and whether you take them all to be *things indifferent*. Is it not an odd sort of Accusers that we have, that sometimes say we suspect the Nation of *common Perjury*, and the Church of Subverting, Corruption, and overthrow of Discipline, and Excommunicating Christ's Faithful Servants; and shortly after say, we Dissent only about things indifferent? God have mercy on those miserable Souls that take such things for indifferent.

4. Who is it troubles the Land with their *things Indifferent*? Is it we? Did we devise them? Do we impose them on any,

and say, *Use our things indifferent, or we will silence you, or Excommmnicate you, and lay you in Gaol with Rogues?* Be such things imposed as *Indifferent?*

L. III. *They say you hold your Opinions in obstinate wilfulness, and have no reason to give for them, and therefore are not to be born with as weak Brethren.*

M. So said the *Arians* of the *Orthodox*, and the *Heathens* of the *Christians.* It's a fine World when ignorant ungodly Lads are heard tell such Men as were Doctor *Reignolds*, *John Fox*, *Amesius*, *Blondel*, *Dailee*, *Chamier*, &c. We can't allow you so much as the Esteem of *Weak Brethren:* I do not think but some of their School-boys might soon be taught by a Bishop to say thus to their Masters.

2. But do all the young Clergy that can talk thus, shew us by any good Evidence, that in other things they are so much *Wiser* and *Learneder* than the *Dissenters?* Are they all of greater Learning than *John Reignolds*, or better *Hebricians* than *Hugh Broughton*, or better *Logicians* than *Sadeel*, or *Ramus*, or *Sohnius*, or of greater Reading than *Blondel*, &c.

3. Do they know us better than we our selves? We offer our Oaths, that we hold what we do by the Cogency of appearing Evidence, and are willing to know the truth.

4. Have I here and elsewhere given *no Reasons* for our *Dissent?* Have they answered my *Treatise of Episcopacy*, my First and Second *Plea for Peace*, my *Apology*, my *Treatise* of the *Terms of Church-Concord*, or any one thing that I have Written for our Cause, save two or three by disputes, which when I have vindicated, they have let fall the Desceptation? What Front have these Men then, that say we *Dissent without giving Reason for it?* But you know how long the Press was shut against our Writings; and yet then they that would not endure us to *speak*, accused us for *being silent.*

L. Obj. IV. *They say you are Non-conformists meerly to make good your former Errors, because you will not confess that you did amiss, but will make the People justifie you.*

M. 1. What are those Errors? If it be our dislike of any of the things before described, I confess it is because we will not renounce them: If it be an Error to be against their Church-Corruptions, and cruel Excommunications, and denying Christendom to the Seed of the Faithful, and Communion to Faithful Christians,

Christians, I confess we will not recant these Errors, till they have better proved them such. The *Papists* that swarm with Errors, as a Beggar doth with Lice, yet *Burn* the *Protestants* as for *Error*.

2. I pray you wish those Infallible Men, that in the Ditch of Dirt are delivered from all the uncleanness of Error, to send only those that are without Error, to cast the first Stone at us, or those that have *no worse Error* than ours to silence, Excommunicate and destroy us.

3. Have we given them no reasons of our Dissent?

4. Do they not know that the Argument that hath brought us all into the case that we are in, was thus given us 1664. and oft since in Print? [*If we abate them any thing, they will say that our Church was faulty, and needed that Reformation*] who then is it that hath divided us to *avoid confession* of any *former faultiness*? Though good Bishop *Hall* pronounceth a heavy Sentence on them that will justifie the Miscarriages of the Prelates.

Read the Lo
St. *Alban's*
Considerati-
ons of Reco
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there was

Advertisement on the present Church-Controversies, and see whether he thought need of Reformation: And Judge *Hales* Papers of Religion.

L. Obj. V. *They say that you took part with the Parliament against the King, and involved the Land in Blood, and have still the same Rebellious Principles.*

M. 1. I confess there were some among us that were of the mind of *Hooker*, *Bilson*, *Grotius*, *Barclay*, and the common sort of *Casuists*, *Politicks*, *&c.* and that thought that as in a doubt about Physick, the Colledge of *Physicians* were most to be trusted, so in a doubt about Law, the Parliament had been most credible: And when the *Irish* had Murdered Two Hundred Thousand Protestants, falsly pretending that they had the Kings Commission, and threatning to finish their works in *England*, there were many formerly tempted to fly in fear to the Parliament for safety; being ignorant that the Kings bare word, notwithstanding the *Papists* Strength and Interest, was more to be trusted with our Laws, Lives and Religion, than all the Lawyers, Courts and Parliament; and that if all the Protestants in *England* had been used as those in *Ireland*, they ought to have died patiently, unless the killers would have given them time to send to the King

to know whether he would have them live or die: They were ignorant that a Lord Proprietor may do with his own as he list. Who acculeth the Owner for killing his own Sheep? But the times of this ignorance are past: The Long Parliament that made the Act of *Uniformity*, cured it: And shall not the Act of *Oblivion* be permitted to reconcile us, and continue our peace?

2. But, Sir, Who be they that were thus deceived? I told you, 1. That of near ten thousand that had Churches under the Parliament and *Cromwel* there was but two thousand that refused to Conform: And is not seven thousand Conformists more than two thousand Dissenters? 2. Many that were in the Parliament's Army Conformed; and some that were for the King's Death; when the generality of those called *Presbyterians* abhorred it, and the Engagement; and brought in the King on reasons of meer Conscience.

3. I have told you that we will take it thankfully, if only those were silenced that had any hand in that War, believing that it will not now be twenty Ministers in *England*. And why are the rest that were Boys at School, accused for other Mens Opinions or Actions? For the time to come, you need not fear them. I heard some tell the Members of the Long Parliament that called them Rebels for saying, That a *Parliament may use Defensive Arms against the Kings Commissioned Souldiers*; that if that would serve, they would promise, that if the King would but send a dozen *Irish-men* to kill them all in the house, they would never be guilty of taking Arms to defend them, nor perswading any else to do it.

L. Obj. VI. *But they say that these Non-conformists, though they had no hand in the late War, yet have the same Principles that caused it, and that is, Non-conformity.*

M. This is an Argument *a baculo ad angulum:* A Man is against the Cross in Baptism, or a Lay-Chancellor's Excommunicating Men for Ceremony, *&c. Ergo*, he is against the King, and for Rebellion. The other side say, That the *Irish* Principles and the *Popish* were the cause; and must we therefore conclude all *Irish* or *Papists* to be against the King? They were *Papists* that raised the Wars on both sides, in the aforesaid days of King *William*, K. *Stephen*, *Hen.* the *1st.* and *Hen.* the *3d.* and *Edw.* the *2d.* and *Rich.* the *2d.* and *Hen.* the *6th.* and *Rich*, the *3d.* and *Edw.* the *4th. &c.* Doth it follow that all *Papists* are Rebels.

2. But

2. But I have elſewhere fully proved that the Parliament when that War began, were of the Church of *England*, and *Conformiſts*; and it's ſtrange that any ſhould have the face to deny it, while ſo many are yet living that know them: *Whitlock* tells us in his Memorials, that they Voted, that every County ſhould have a *Biſhop* and his *Presbytery*: and were thoſe then againſt Epiſcopacy? One would think that a County ſhould be big enough to keep Epiſcopacy from dwindling to nothing; every Biſhop of old had but one City: Many Counties have ten, or near twenty Towns that were then called Cities. But when *Papiſts* dare ſay, that all are againſt Kings, that are againſt the Pope, who is the Ruler and Depoſer of Kings; it's no wonder if every Biſhop, or Chancellor, or Official, *&c.* will ſay, if you be not for us, you are againſt the King; ſince all are ſworn againſt altering the Church-Government before that of the State.

Mr. *Martin* that loſt an Arm in the Kings Service in the War, lay in Goal at *Warwick*, for Preaching when Silenced; and Mr. *Francis Brampfield*, that was againſt the Parliament's War, lay ſeven years in Goal for Preaching as a *Non-conformiſt*, and died in *New-Gate*. *Non-conformiſts* that have been, and are moſt for the King, do ſuffer as much as others.

3. Read my ſecond *Plea for Peace*, in which I declare our Political Principles; and tell us what you there diſlike.

L. Obj. VII. *But why do you refuſe to renounce all the Obligation of the Covenant, if you are not Diſloyal.*

M. If you reduce your Objection to an Argument, it muſt run thus; (All thoſe are Diſloyal to the King, who think that this Vow binds them to be againſt Prophaneneſs, Popery or Schiſm, or to endeavour any amending or alteration of the Prelatical way of Church-Government: But, *&c.* I deny the Major. Is he an Honourer of the King, that dare affirm this?)

We are ready to renounce all Obligation from that or any other Covenant, to any Diſloyalty whatever.

L. Obj. VIII. *They ſay, that your Preaching is unneceſſary, there being Miniſters enough without you, and therefore that you Preach but to keep up a Party, and your own Reputation and Intereſt in them.*

M. And I think that Prieſt fitter for Tears than for Diſputes, that ſo little knowing *England*, or the work of the Office they undertake: If I know the Church that hath ſuch a Paſtor, I

be past doubt that they have need of help. I would as soon believe him if he undertook to build a Castle alone, and said he had no need of help; or that forty thousand of the Poor of *London* have no need of Relief, and that it is Rebellion to Relieve them; as that the forementioned two hundred thousand have no need of teaching or Ministerial help for their Souls.

L. Obj. IX. *There are some that have written that it is Pride and Covetousness that makes you Non-conformists to seem Godly, and to get Livings for your Sons.*

M. Satan is so impudent a Disputant, that I am weary of answering him, though in self-defence: If it be Pride to be scorn'd and toss'd about as Rogues, why will these humble Lord Bishops and Masters so be-rogue us to make us proud? Men use to take down that which feeds their Enemies pride: I pray get them to restore us from Poverty, and Prisons, and Scorns, and Slanders, to take down our pride.

And for Covetousness, get them one year to take our turns, to have all their Goods and Books taken away, on the Penalty of 40 *l.* for every Sermon, and that to be levied on their Hearers, which they cannot pay, and in this case to lie in Goal, and tell us when they have tried it, whether it gratified their Covetousness.

As to Mens *Charity* to our selves or Sons; 1. I have said heretofore, that the two thousand that were ejected, were fit for *Bedlam*, if they would go out and suffer, that so forty Mens Sons that conform against their Fathers wills, might get Benefices. 2. They will take it for a disgrace to their Church, if we should not grant that the Lords, Knights, Rich Men and Patrons, are far more of their Church, than of Dissenters; and therefore liker to prefer Conformists Sons, than others: And a *Living for the Father, another for the Son*, is more than a *possibility* for *one*. But brazen-faced impudence cannot be confuted.

L. Obj. X. *They say you are meer Hypocrites, that have learnt a shew of Holiness and Justice, but have false, proud, self-conceited, rebellious hearts.*

M. And truly we cannot confute them any otherwise than by an Appeal to the Judge of Hearts: We cannot shew them our Hearts: And if they say that they see and know them, let Men believe them as they see cause. They did not craftily so much to praise our outside; for those that take them not for Gods, will hardly believe that thy see any deeper.

But

But as far as I understand, their meaning is. That no Man on Earth, is truly Honest and Godly; and therefore all are *Hypocrites* that profess it. And so they confess themselves *Hypocrites* in professing Christianity, if *Professing* be the mark of *Hypocrites*.

L. Obj. XI. *They say that you are Rebels and Schismaticks against the Church, and that's as bad as Murder, or Adultery; and so you are more vicious than they.*

M. It's well they made their Chancellors, Officials, Commissaries, *&c.* the Church first: I confess I am not unapt to believe that they take it for worse than Adultery, Murder, Persecution, or Perjury, to cross their wills and Worldly Interest. And if calling themselves (*the Church*) would make any needy or ambitious pack of Men, the Masters of all Mens Consciences, and Persons, and Estates, I should not wonder if more than *Papists* and *Prelatists* strove to be called, *The Church.*

L. Obj. XII. *But they say all Antiquity condemneth Schism, and you are they that will not suffer the Church to have Unity and Peace, in disobeying the Bishops; and Rebellion is as the sin of Witchcraft, and Disobedience as Idolatry.*

M. The sence of this last Clause is [*God calls it like Witchcraft and Idolatry to Obey Him, and Rebel against His Laws*: Ergo, *it is like Witchcraft and Idolatry not to Rebel and Disobey Him if Bishops command us*] Prove the consequence.

2. Do not *Papists call them Schismaticks* and *Hereticks* too, as long and as loud as they call us so? And will this *prove* them such indeed? We Appeal to the common Reason of Mankind, whether they that make a multitude of sinful Canons, to persecute Christ's Church and Servants, and add to his Laws an hundred forty one of their own, with inhumane Penalties, casting out those that obey them not, be not rather Schismaticks than they that say, We will hold Concord in all that Christ commandeth, or his Apostles practised, but we dare not obey you against God. Read my *Search for the Schismaticks*, and The *English Schismatick Detected and Confuted*, and then blame the Schismatick and spare not.

L. Obj. XIII. *But they say that it is but a company of self-conceited, bad, Rebellious People that befriend or follow you, and the sober People are for them.*

M. These

M. Theſe things are unfit matter for a Controverſy with any *Engliſh*-Men of this Age, but only with Forreigners and Strangers. I thought once it would never have been ſo hard to know good Men from bad, as theſe would make it. But I remember how bad Chriſt and his Apoſtles were thought by their Perſecutors. Wherein doth ſuch Mens badneſs lie? In not coming to their Churches? Thouſands do, and the reſt go to other Churches: But thouſands of our Adverſaries go to none, but very rarely.

Is it in any *other Vice*: Why do they then charge them with *avoiding Vice in Hypocriſie*? And what is that Vice? Here are, ſome ſay, many hundreds that practiſe Phyſick in *London*: The Poſts, Walls, and Gates are ſtickt with Phyſicians offers to cure the Lecherous Pox: To day I read *Kirleu*'s Bill, that ſaith he hath cureth eight hundred of that Diſeaſe. I dare Bet with you all the Money I have, that if you enquire, not eight, or perhaps two of that eight hundred were *Puritans*, or ſuch as you now caſt out for *Non-conformiſts*, (unleſs you call *Papiſts* or ſuch other, *Non-conformiſts*) except any of them were Wives that catcht it of Husbands that are of your Church or Pariſhes, and not of us, or Husbands that catcht it of ſuch Conformable, (or *Papiſts*) Wives. But of theſe things we need no defence.

3. But if our Hearers be bad, they have the more need of teaching; and whether more are converted from ignorance, ſenſuality, worldlineſs and prophaneneſs, by their teaching or ours, ask others and not us.

L. Obj. XIV. *But they ſay that it's by you that we are in danger of Popery, becauſe you keep up their hopes of a Toleration by your diviſions weakning us.*

M. They may of the two, ſay more probably it is we that bring in *Prelacy*, Lay-Excommunicators, Ceremonies, Lyturgies: For of the two, we have done leſs againſt theſe, than againſt Popery, and ſtand not at ſo great a diſtance from them: The impudency of ſome Men is the ſhame of depraved Humane Nature. They know that it is for being more againſt Popery than they are, that our Ruine is ſo implacably endeavoured. They know that the *Papiſts* are our chiefeſt Proſecutors, thinking that if they could deſtroy us as their greateſt Adverſaries, they ſhould bring the Church of *England* to their will, and that it is but appropriating the *Name of Popery* to the *Italian Faction* that ſet the

Pope

Pope above Councils, and calling the reſt by a *better Name*, and cutting off a few ſhreds named by *Heylin* in the Life of Archbiſhop *Laud*, and it's done. They know that it is for drawing ſo near to Popery that the Non-Conformiſts diſſent from them; and take it for granted that thoſe men that are labouring to bring in Popery, are the forwardeſt to make this putid accuſation of us; and that it hath been their labour theſe two and twenty years to have forc'd us to yield to an univerſal toleration, and to petition for it, that they might bring in Popery, and then ſay it is we that did it, and that for denying this and being unreconcileable to Popery, the Papiſts are ſo unreconcileable to us, as that nothing will ſatisfie them but our utter extirpation, of which they would make blind, ſenſual, debauched, malignant men that call themſelves Proteſtants the inſtruments. And how many of their pillars have written for a foreign Juriſdiction and defend *Grotius*, I have told you before. And to this day that Prieſt that is neareſt to Popery, is the bittereſt enemy to the Non-Conformiſts, and moſt preacheth for their deſtruction: And theſe brazen faced men cannot endure an honeſt Conformiſt that doth but prefer Proteſtants that diſſent from their fetters before the *Papiſts*: And thoſe Biſhops and Arch-biſhops and the very Church of *England* in their times, that were moſt againſt *Popery*, are their ſcorn and hatred, as you may ſee in *Heylin's* reproach of Arch-biſhop *Abbot*, and the Biſhops and Convocation, except ſix Biſhops in his days: And by the baſe ſcorns that they now pour out againſt good Arch-biſhop *Grindal*, calling ſuch men as would ſtrengthen us againſt *Popery* by reconciliation, by the names of *Grindalizers* and *Trimmers*, and ſuch as would betray the Church: And how they reproach and uſe Dr. *Whitby* for his *Proteſtant Reconciler*, and Mr. *Bold* for his *Sermon*, and the Author of the *four Pleas of the Conformiſts for the Non-Conformiſts*, and ſuch others, you know: The Author of the *Reflections*, and the *Samaritan* they have not yet found out. Mr. *Thomas Beverley* feareth them not: The Biſhop of *Hereford*, Dr. *Crofts*, (the firſt man that ever I ſaw go forth with a Troop raiſed by his Brother for the King, and his Sermon in my *Pulpit* the firſt that ever I heard againſt the *Parliament*, when the King was in *Yorkſhire*, and he himſelf had been a *Papiſt*, and is ſtill zealous for their Church cauſe) becauſe he wrote the Book called *Naked Truth*, to heal us and ſtrengthen us againſt *Popery*, they gnaſh

the Teeth at him; and so they do at Dr. *Barlow* Bishop of *Lincoln*, that wrote of the treasonable principles of Papists, though these Bishops are too big for them yet to villifie, and openly oppose.

L. *You may be more against Popery than they, and yet bring it in imprudently by dividing us.*

M. Who do you think in your Conscience is liker to bring it in, we or they? Who hath done and suffer'd more to keep it out? We lay down all that we have to that end: They will not part with a Ceremony, or one Oath, or a Re ordination, or an Excommunication of Christs Members to keep it out; but plainly tell us, that they had rather Popery came in than abate a jott of their Self-made Religion or Impositions, or than such as I should Preach the Gospel.

But I confess I am not able to deny it, that the Non-Conformists may be the occasion of bringing in Popery, by way of *Antiperistasis*; some men hate us and all serious Godliness so much, that they are like enough to be for Popery, because godly men are against it: And I fear lest they that see the Non-Conformists would reform their Prelacy and Church-Courts, and reduce them to the Primitive Episcopacy, described by Bishop *Usher*, will be so much afraid, lest they lose some of their Wealth and Domination by it, that some of them will hearken to the Papists, that will promise them an Encrease of that which they so esteem. And indeed it is already no strange thing to hear them say, They had rather the Papists came in with Popery, than the Dissenters with their Reformation.

I think ere long you are like to be convinced more effectually than by Writing, which Party is liker to bring in Popery, and to turn Papists. In the mean time I begin to praise *Stephen Gardiner*, and such others, for their Modesty, that when they burnt *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Hooper*, *Philpot*, *Rogers*, and the rest, that they did not charge them with bringing in Popery, and say, we burn you for that.

L. XV. *They say that you stretch the Words of the Oaths, Declarations, Subscriptions, Liturgy and Canons, to an ill sence, by a rigorous Interpretation, which was never the Meaning of the Authors; and on that you ground your Dissent.*

M. 1. I hope you will grant, that when the things that men fear (whether justly or mistakingly) no less than deliberate Lying, Perjury, and Contracting by Justification the Guilt of many

many hundred thousand Perjuries, and Swearing or Covenanting never to repent or endeavour that the Nation should repent of heinous Church-Corruptions, or amend them, and the nullifying of the Ordination and Ministry of Thousands, and Unchurching almost all the Protestant Churches, and more such like, a man should not play with Matters of this moment, nor take God's dreadful Name in vain, nor sport with the Consuming Fire. And I hope you grant, that Words in Oaths and Impositions, are to be taken in the propereſt usual sence, unless the Authors otherwise expound them. And you know that they have been so far from expounding them otherwise, as that these twenty years they have refused it, and in *Scotland* sentenc'd the Earl of *Argyle* to die for expounding them as some would have us do. And what do Oaths or Covenants signifie, if the Takers may put what sence they will on them, and if the most expreſs Universals, yea, the expreſs Exclusions of all Exceptions, may be taken in a particular sence with Exceptions, such Swearers and Subscribers give their Rules no security. Is it not enough to tell you we will willingly stand to Bishop *Sanderson*'s own Rules in his Excellent Prelections *de Juramento*, for expounding Oaths and Promises?

Such as these Expositions of stretchers, make Oaths to be none, *viz.* [*It's unlawful*] that is, *against the King's Law but not against God's* [*to take Arms against the King*] viz. *As King*, but say the Papists, when the Pope excommunicates and deposeth him, he is no King [*on any pretence whatsoever,*] that is, *any unjust pretence,* [*by his Authority against his Person*] viz *It is to be done by Gods Authority and not by his,* [*or against any Commissioned by him,*] viz. *Lawfully Commissioned, of which we are discerning Judges.* The same I may say of all the rest: As *Assenting* and *Consenting to all things, except many things:* Swearing *Canonical Obedience in Licitis & Honestis*, when we judge ten or twenty Canons, if not the very frame to be *Illicita & Inhonesta*, &c.

L. *But as you have said that those Great Men*, Grotius, *and Bishop* Jeremy Taylor *were for profitable Lying, so you know that Worthy Latitudinarian Dr. who was wont to say*, That if false Knaves would turn him out of his Ministry and Living, by ensnaring Impositions, he would take the Words in the best sence he could subdue them to, whatever the Authors meant; *and it was as Lawful for him to defend himself against Knaves with his Tongue, as with his Hands and Sword.*

M. He is newly gone to his Judge : *Nobis non licet* —— I told you that in my Catechiſm on the Ninth Commandment, I have given unanſwerable Reaſons againſt Lying, for any Benefit whatever.

Some ſay that all our Articles of Religion, are but *Articles of Peace*, and we ſubſcribe not to believe *them true*, but *not to preach againſt them.* At this rate men need not ſtick at any Oath, and may ſhake off the Oath of Allegiance, or any other when they have taken it. And if we are thought worthy to be hated, and ruined as Rogues, for refuſing ſelf-ſaving, prudential, deliberate Lying, and Perjury, when Oaths and Veracity are ſo much of the ſecurity of the Eſtates, Names, and Lives, of Kings and Subjects, and ſo neceſſary to all humane Converſe, we patiently commit our Cauſe to Him that ſhortly and righteouſly will determine all.

CHAP. LVIII. *Whether Communion with ſo Faulty a Church be Lawful.*

L. I *Shewed what you ſaid againſt Conformity to a Friend, and when he had read it, he ſaid, What a* Self-contradictor *is this Man, to lay all this Charge on the Church of* England, *and yet himſelf to hold Communion with it, and perſwade others ſo to do? Can we touch Pitch and not be defiled? And indeed if all this be as bad as you fear, I cannot ſee how any Separatiſts are to be blamed, or how any may Communicate with ſo bad a Church.*

M. *Sic ſtulti vitia vitant*, drunken men reel from ſide to ſide; to keep one right tract, or to cut by a thred, ſeemeth impoſſible to them.

I. You muſt diſtinguiſh between the Dioceſan Churches as conſtituted by their Courts of Government and Canons, and the Pariſh Churches.

II. Between thoſe Pariſh-Churches which have godly or tolerable Paſtors, and thoſe that have not.

III. Between Miniſtry and Lay-Communion.

IV. Between *ſtated* and *occaſional Communion.*

V. Between preferring their Churches before better, and not avoiding them as null, or as unlawful to be Communicated with.

Underſtand theſe five diſtinctions well, and I ſhall ſatisfie you.

L. *Ap-*

L. *Apply them, and let us hear your Judgment.*

M. I. The *Dioceſan Churches*, as they *Depoſe all inferiour Biſhops and Churches*, and Rule by their *Lay-Civilians*, *Church-Cenſures*, I diſown and hold no Communion with in *thoſe Errors*, but only in their *Chriſtianity*. But I peaceably *ſubmit* to *them*, and would live quietly under them, if I might.

II. Thoſe *Pariſhes* that have *notoriouſly uncapable Prieſts*, either through *utter Inſufficiency*, *Hereſy*, or *Hurtfulneſs*, doing more harm than good, I own not to be Organized Churches, nor have Communion with their *Miniſters* as *Miniſters*, not owning them for ſuch.

III. I hold it utterly unlawful to be Miniſters with them, on the *terms* now required of us; and therefore I have no ſuch Miniſterial Communion with them.

IV. I preferr them not before better.

V. I hold not fixed Communion as a fixed Member of their Churches, with all that I hold occaſional Communion with.

L. *What Communion is it then than you hold with them?*

M. I. With the *Dioceſans* and their *Officers*, I hold mental Communion as a Chriſtian and a Proteſtant in all the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, and that Reformation which they own.

II. With the *Pariſh-Churches* that have *true Miniſters*, I hold *mental Communion*, as *true particular Churches of Chriſt*, (though faulty) and *local Communion* on juſt occaſions.

III. With the Pariſh-Aſſemblies that have *intolerable Miniſters*, I hold *mental Communion* with the *People as Chriſtians*, and will not refuſe on juſt occaſion to joyn with them in any good Excerciſe as *Lay-men*.

IV. With thoſe Churches that have Miniſters and Liturgy as ours that need Reformation, I profeſs to joyn with them as Chriſtians and Proteſtants that own all the Scriptures, and that promiſe to Preach nothing as neceſſary to Salvation, but what is contained in it, or may be proved by it: And when I Communicate with that Church, it is as a Society ſo profeſſing: But if their Sermons, Liturgy, or Lives have any faults, being not *Idolatry*, *Hereſy*, *Blaſphemy*, or ſuch as rendreth their whole Worſhip, and Aſſembling unacceptable to God, I diſown Communion in any of thoſe faults, tho' I be preſent.

V. When I can have better *cæteris paribus*, without greater hurt than good, I prefer it; and only uſe *occaſio-*

nal

nal local Communion, with the *Liturgy-Churches*, as I would do with ſtrangers were I in Foreign Lands.

VI. Where I can have no better, without more hurt than good, I Communicate conſtantly and only with the Pariſh-Church where I live, as to Local-Communion.

L. *But how can you do either of theſe without guilt, when they are as bad as you have deſcribed?*

M. 1. I have not charged the Pariſh-Churches with that which I have charged the *Dioceſans* and their Courts with; many honeſt Miniſters, never troubled nor Excommunicated a true Servant of Chriſt, nor ever owned intentially the doing it by others. They lament the Impoſitions, and would be glad we were united by their removal: They would fain have good Men reſtored; and they do their beſt to promote Godlineſs. And the Ordinary Lords-Day part of the *Liturgy* though not faultleſs, containeth things true and good, and it was a very great and excellent degree of Reformation, to make that Book: And the moſt of all its faults are in the By-Offices, Baptiſm, Confirmation, and Burial, and the Rubricks, which the Lords-Day common Worſhip is not concerned in, nor do the Congregation approve.

2. Sin hath brought woful faultineſs into all the Churches on Earth: And there are very few on Earth that have not worſe Doctrine, and a worſe Liturgy than ours: What then? Muſt we either own or hide all their faults, or elſe diſown and renounce them all? No neither, but diſown what is evil, and own what is good; and ſeparate from none of them further than they ſeparate from Chriſt.

3. But I pray you anſwer me a few queſtions:

1. Do you think any Church on Earth to be faultleſs.

L. *No: For all Men are faulty, but the difference is great.*

M. No doubt it is great: But, 2. Do you think that you are guilty of all the faults of the Church that you joyn with?

L. *They ſay, no, not of the* ſecret faults: *But of the* open *they ſay we are partakers by our preſence.*

M. Do you think there is any Church on Earth that *hath no open Faults*? And will you joyn with none?

L. *But they ſay, it is not Faults of* Converſation *that they mean, but in* Miniſtry, Doctrine, *and* Worſhip.

M. I am ſure *Converſation Faults* are oft alledged for *Separation:* But is there any Miniſter or Church that hath no *open Faults* in *Miniſtry* and *Worſhip*.

L. *They*

L. *They mean not* small Infirmities, *such as weak, faulty expressions, methods, disorders, dullness*, &c. *but* gross, Intolerable Faults.

M. So then you are come to what I hold, I profess that if I see or hear any such *Blasphemy*, *Idolatry*, *Heresy*, or *Malignity*, as renders the *Worship* abhorred of God, I will abhor it and avoid it.

L. *Is none of all that such which you have described?*

M. Nothing in the ordinary Lords-day Worship, which the Congregation must joyn in: Yea, I dare not say that their By-Offices, *viz.* Baptism it self, notwithstanding their kind of God Fathers and Crossing, doth frustrate the Sacrament to the Capable. And the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, is very piously Administred in the words of the Liturgy: And if they force Men thither or admit them that are unfit, that maketh not the words of the Liturgy unfit for the Faithful, and their Faults in *Discipline* are none of mine.

L. *But Faults* known before hand *become mine if I joyn with such a faulty Worship.*

M. Then you must joyn with none on Earth, You know before hand your own Faults, that you will be guilty of in Prayer: Must you therefore forbear to pray? Suppose I have a Teacher that is an *Anabaptist*, an *Antinomian*, or hath some known Tolerable Error, which I know before hand he holds, and useth to vend in his praying and preaching. Is it unlawful to joyn with such? Then *Presbyterians*, *Independants*, and all that differ in Judgment, must still run away from one another.

L. *But to commit a Fault themselves makes it but their own, but if they impose it* on me, *it's mine if I be present.*

M. You should have said only, *It's mine if I commit it.* If you were commanded to burn a Martyr, your presence maketh you not guilty if you do it not, nor consent to the doing of it.

2. It's one thing to impose on you the committing of a Fault, and another thing to impose on you to hear another Man commit it.

3. And it's one thing to impose that which you *can refuse*, and another to force you *to do it.*

When an *Anabaptist*, or an *Antinomian*, or a Preacher of undecent expressions or disorder, teacheth in the Assembly, he imposeth on them all to hear *his Faults*, but not *approve them, or do the like*: Or if he command them to believe his Errors, it is *refusable imposition*, and they may choose.

L. *But*

L. *But in the Congregation I muſt do as they do.*

M. What muſt you do that is ſin? Muſt you ſay all that the Prieſt will ſay? Muſt you believe all his miſtakes? Muſt you put up any unlawful requeſt to God?

L. *Yes, ſay they; we muſt pray for Biſhops.*

M. I think verily they have need of Prayer: But they ſeem to be very humble Petitioners themſelves, when they bid you pray for them, but as to a *God that worketh great Marvels.* But muſt you needs own every Petition in the Aſſembly? By what Obligation? Do you undertake to own every Petition that your own Preacher will put up, before you know what he will ſay? Yea, or if you knew he would ſpeak amiſs? I have elſewhere told you that one of the Zealouſeſt Non-conformiſts againſt Prelacy, was old Mr. *Humphery Fen* of *Coventry*, and he was wont after every Collect in the *Common-Prayer* to ſay *Amen* aloud, except the prayer for the Biſhops: And he thought his ſilence was ſufficient notice of his Diſſent.

L. *But the broken Reſponſes are ludicrous and intolerable.*

M. Prejudice may make any thing ſeem ſo. But, 1. The *Jews* Church uſed ſuch as the Scriptures tell us. They are the oldeſt part of all the Liturgy, uſed by the Church, when Holy fervency would not endure to be ſilenced or reſtrained to a bare *Amen.* 3. And if it were not that prophane men uſe them unreverently, and ſo bring them into diſgrace, but they were again uſed fervently by Zealous Chriſtians, they would ſeem quite another thing. 4. And we do the ſame thing in effect, when all the people ſing the *Pſalm*, ſave that the Tune keepeth them better in time and order, and avoideth the confuſion.

L. *But my Friend ſaith that the Apoſtle ſaith*, with ſuch no not to Eat, and from ſuch turn away: *And you ſeem to ſuſpect them (tho' you only ſay what you avoid your ſelf) of Lying, Perjury, Perſecution*, &c. *And is it not a ſin to Communicate with ſuch?*

M. 1. I never told you that I took all the Pariſh-Miniſters or people for Perſecutors. No, nor for Lyers: For when they ſay that *ex animo* they hold that nothing in the Liturgy or Ceremonies, *&c.* is contrary to the Word of God, they ſpeak as they think. But it would be a *Lye in me* who am otherwiſe perſwaded.

And

And for *Perjury*; It's one thing *grosly* to be *Perjured*; I charged them not with that: And it's another thing to say or do somewhat that may make a man some way guilty of other mens *Perjury*: This is it which *Affrights me* from Conformity; but as *to them*, they understand the words of Oaths, and Promises, and Impositions, otherwise than I do (as I told you the Earl of *Argyle* did) and I doubt not but many Worthy men, such as Mr. *Gurnal*, and others known to us, were drawn in, by having leave to declare that they took the Impositions in such a Sense as they thought Lawful (as the *Arians* at the Council of *Seleucia*, and the *Acacians* drew many in to them by giving them all leave to subscribe in their own Sense:) And though I can justifie none of this; yet whatever their words were, and though they were not faultless, their hearts abhorred *Perjury*.

But I pray you ask your Friend these Questions, 1. Did none that are for Separation from the Church of *England* take the *Corporation-Oath* and *Declaration*? You know that many of them did.

2. Do *they* ever since avoid Communion with all those men? You know they do not. And yet none of the Ministers Subscriptions to me seem half so frightful as the *Corporation Declaration*. Do they not then here shew Partiality, and themselves justifie our Communion with the Conformists?

Yea, when Mr. *Eaton*, and some other *Independants* wrote against the Obligation of the *Covenant*, and of the *Oath of Allegiance*, and many called the *Covenant* an *Almanack out of Date*; did the rest avoid Communion with these?

L. *But briefly tell me why you Communicate in the Parish-Churches.*

M. Briefly, 1. Because Christ hath commanded us to live in the utmost Love, Union and Concord with all his Church on Earth, that we possibly can.

2. Because they hold all the Essentials of Christianity, which constituteth them Members of Christ's Church, and no Error that nullifieth their Christianity, or maketh their Communion unlawful to me.

3. Because my own Edification hath required it: I have long lived, where I could have no better Communion; and after I found Communion with both sorts most profitable to me; I found the Liturgy in the main, fit for my serious desires and praises to

God, and the Preachers that *I* heard were profitable Preachers, and if some words were amiss, I past them by; and the very Concord and Presence of Christians (though faulty) is pleasant to me.

4. I lived where and when these Parish Churches were slandered by mistakes, to be such whose Communion was unlawful; and my constant avoiding them, would have made me seem a consenter to the slanders, and so to be guilty of scandal.

5. I lived in a time and place, where the Rulers and Laws commanded Parish Communion; and to forbear it against such commands and penalties, seemeth plainly to tell the World that I hold it unlawful, which is an untruth.

6. I had seen whether this extream of Separation had brought this Nation, formerly, and of late; and what a hopeful Reformation it shamed and destroyed, and that by such Rebellious and mad actions, as made them, and accidentally others, the scorn and hatred of the World, and have occasioned all our Sufferings.

7. I lived where Men that I thought guilty of our sinful persecution and the danger of the Land, did discern the mistake of them that overcharged the Liturgy and Parish-Communion, and thereupon took them for a proud Fanatick sort of people, worthy of all that doth befal them, and think they do God service in ruining us all, as if we were such: And I durst not thus scandalize and harden Men in grievous persecutions.

8. I was loth to misguide others by my example; and I doubted not but when necessity drove them to it, many would see cause to Communicate with the Parish-Churches. And I was willing that they should sooner see these Reasons, and not seem to do it only to save themselves.

9. I had read the Writings of those excellent Men of God against *Brownists*, or Separation heretofore; who then were the Non-conformists that did suffer so much for Reformation: He that will read what is Written by Mr. *John Paget*, Mr. *William Bradshaw*, Mr. *Gifford*, Mr. *Hildersham*, Mr. *Brightman*, Mr. *John Ball*, Mr. *Rathband*, Doctor *Ames* First and Second Manuduction, *&c.* and lately Mr. *John Tombes*, the Pillar of the *Anabaptists*; and for hearing by Mr. *Philip Nye*, may see enough for just satisfaction; especially in Mr. *Ball's* Tryal of Separation. And though the case of Conformity be since made much

much harder to the Miniſters, to the Laity the change is not ſo great as herein alters the caſe of Lawfulneſs or Duty.

10. I found that Saint *Paul* charged the Church of *Corinth*, as having among them men Carnal, guilty of Schiſm, Slandering the Apoſtles; guilty of ſinful Law-Suits, and defrauding each other, bearing with Inceſt, diſordered, prophane and drunk at Sacramental Communions; ſome decryed the Reſurrection, *&c.* The *Galatians* ſeem more to be accuſed than they, as depraving the Chriſtian Doctrine. The *Coloſsians* faulty; almoſt all the Seven Churches of *Aſia* charged with grievous Corruption. And yet in all theſe, no man is commanded to ſeparate from any one of theſe Churches, nor blamed for not doing it.

11. And, which is moſt of all, I find that Chriſt himſelf, who was certainly ſinleſs, held open Communion with the *Jewiſh* Church in Synagogues and Temples, and commanded the people their duty even to the falſly obtruded Prieſts, and to hear the *Phariſees* while they delivered *Moſes*'s Law; though he condemned and ſeparated from their falſe Doctrine, Superſtitious Traditions and Corruptions.

Theſe are my Reaſons for Lay-Pariſh Communion.

L. *But you did not anſwer* [from ſuch turn away, *and* with ſuch not to Eat, *&c.*]

M. The anſwer is obvious; 1. It is the duty of the Church to caſt out wicked impenitent men; and this Chriſt commandeth them; but he never bids particular Chriſtians to ſeparate from the Church where ſome ſuch are, becauſe the Church omits its duty: For then you ſhould ſeparate from duty, from Gods Worſhip and Holy Communion, on pretence of ſeparating from ſinners.

2. But for Family and Private Converſe, every Chriſtian is Judge himſelf, and muſt refuſe all familiarity with ſcandalous Chriſtians which encourageth them in ſin, or ſeemeth to own it.

God commandeth no man to do that which is not in his power; to put a ſcandalous impenitent man from the Church, is in the Churches power, and ſo that command belongs to them; it is not in your power, and therefore belongs not to you, ſave to admoniſh men, and tell the Church; but to put men from your Table and familiarity, is in your power and belongs to you.

Suppoſe the King Write to the City of *London* to put all Rebels out of their Company and Converſe; it's eaſy to under-

ſtand, that if every one muſt do it only in his own place. Every ſingle man cannot turn ſuch out of the Communion-Council: The City Rulers muſt do that, and till it be done, ſingle men may not deny Obedience to the Governours: But all may turn them out of their Houſes, Shops and Familiarity.

L. *But they ſay it is a receding from our former Reformation, and pulling down what we built.*

M. The Separators pull'd it down with a witneſs; but it is no ſuch thing: Did the Covenant or our Profeſſion ever bind us to take the Liturgy, to be worſe than it is, or the Pariſh-Churches to be no Churches, or their Communion to be utterly unlawful? Or did it bind us to preferr a deſertion of all publick Communion before it? No, it did not; but if it had, it had been ſinful, and to be repented of. But, 1. We were bound by God's word (and no Covenant or Practices bind us to any more than Scripture binds us to) to avoid all that is ſin. 2. And when we have our choice to prefer the beſt; he that doth either turn to ſin, or preferr a leſs good, when it is ſo, before a greater, goeth back; but he that preferreth *no Publick* Worſhip, before the Pariſh Worſhip, goeth back indeed, and breaketh the *Covenant*, by Prophaneneſs and Schiſm. God's word is a clearer and ſuer *Teſt* of our *Duty* and *Controverſies*, than any humane *Covenants*.

When Miniſters were changed, 1647. many places got out ſome tolerable weak Miniſters, to get in abler men in great Towns. When the Biſhops returned, their abler Miniſters being dead or ejected, they took the old ones again. Did theſe go back from *Covenant*-Reformation or Duty, when they would have no better? Had not thoſe been the Revolters that would rather have had none?

L. *But why go you to the Pariſh-Churches, when you might have better?*

M. 1. All Non-conformiſts Preach not better than many of them; yea, the Liturgy is better words of Prayer, than ſome weak or faulty Non-conformiſts oft uſe.

2. A brown Loaf and a white one both, may be better than a white one alone; I found both beſt; and I knew it ſin to Renounce *Communion* with any *Church* for weakneſs, becauſe they are not as good as others.

3. That is beſt at one time and place, that is not ſo at another; Praying in it ſelf, is better than working, and Eating, and ſleeping.

ſleeping. And yet in their proper time, your ſervants working, and your eating and ſleeping is better than praying at that time. One that is a Son, a Servant, a Wife, who is commanded by the Maſter of the Family to hear a tolerable Pariſh-Miniſter, may then find it better than diſorderly and diſobediently to hear an abler Man; that may by variety of conditions be one mans Duty, which is anothers ſin.

But alas! I fear that Communion with a Non-Conformiſt-Church will quickly in *England* be ſo rare, as will end the controverſie which you ſhould prefer, and you muſt have Pariſh-Church Communion or none: As it was before 1638. when there was ſcarce more than one Non-Conformiſt that held any Church-Communion but Parochial, in each County. I think, God's Judgments will ſoon ſilence this diſpute with all that will not renounce all Local Church Communion.

I will conclude with another reaſon of my practice. Almoſt every Church on Earth hath a worſe Liturgy (as I ſaid) and *People* than ours: But I dare not ſeparate from almoſt every Church on Earth: And therefore not from one for a reaſon that is common to almoſt all.

CHAP. LIX. *A Draught of ten Articles containing that which the Non-Conforming Reconcilers deſire, to unite us, and heal the Church, when GOD ſeeth this Land meet for ſo great a Mercy.*

L. *I Have one thing more to deſire of you, That you will ſo far anſwer the common queſtion,* What would you have? *As to tell it us punctually, as to thoſe things which you take to be neceſſary to our agreement: It may be hereafter they may be regarded and uſed, though not in our days.*

M. Do you mean as to the ends and things deſired of us or a form of Words to be the containing means? As to the former; 1. We deſire nothing but the promoting God's Glory, Kingdom and Will, according to the three firſt Petitions in the Lord's *Prayer*, for the Information, Sanctification, and Salvation of the *People*; by the *Pure*, *Plentiful*, and *Powerful* preaching of the Goſpel, the True and Spiritual Worſhipping of GOD, and the due Exerciſe of Church-Diſcipline according to Chriſts Laws. And that herein all Chriſtians may live in Love, and *Peace*,

Peace, and as much Concord as they can: And to that end that they may take God's Word which they are all agreed in as the Test of their Concord, and as sufficient for all things necessary to Salvation, and the only universal Law: And that the Churches may not be torn by the imposition of Mens Canonical Engines as necessary to Liberty or Communion, in which all never did nor can unite. And that such course may be taken for the Choice of Church-Pastors, that the Flocks may be guided and fed by Truth and Love, and not famished nor oppress by Malignants that hate the serious practice of what they Preach.

It is not Wealth nor Honour, nor any thing but this, that we desire; but see small hopes of attaining by Men.

L. *The desires are honest, but you all profess just desires in general, and* define: *But I desire you to leave to the World in writing the* ipsissima Verba, *which you would wish in a healing Law, with as little change as may be.*

M. I shall do it, premising, 1. That such a yielding form must contain but what's of necessity to our Concord, and not all that our *well-being* requireth. 2. That the words must not be too many, lest they seem too tedious, nor too few, lest they be not intelligible. 3. That they that will defeat them will pretend but to change the words, and thereby cross our fence and necessities; but take them, though men give us no present hopes.

A Breviate of the Ten Articles desired by such *Non-Conformists* as treated for Concord, 1660. and 1661. for such a Reformation of the Parish-Churches as is needful to our Union.

I. *THat the Profession of the Christian Faith, and consent to the Baptismal Covenant, by Parents, or Pro-parents or Adopters for Infants, and by the Adult for themselves, be the terms of Church-Entrance by Baptism.*

II. *That*

II. *That the Terms of the Communion and Priviledges of the Adult, be, That they have personally owned and renewed solemnly the said Christian Covenant, and are not proved to have nulled that Profession by Apostasie, Heresie, or an inconsistent wicked Life; And that they understandingly desire the said Communion.*

III. *For the necessary notification of such understanding, consent and desire, the Pastors that know them, after due Catechizing shall try them; and upon Approbation admit them to the Communion of the Adult, or upon a just Certificate that they have been so approved and received by any other Orthodox Pastor.*

IV. *Such as are proved to violate the Baptismal Covenant, by Apostasie, Heresie, or a wicked Life, the Pastor must (wisely and compassionately) admonish to repent and amend. And if after private and open Admonition such remain obstinately impenitent, the Pastor shall publickly declare them Persons unfit for Communion with the Church; or where so much is not permitted, shall at least forbear to give them the Sacrament; but shall receive them when they credibly profess Repentance.*

V. *No unnecessary Oath, Covenant, Subscription, Profession or Promise, shall be made necessary to Communion or Ministry; such being Engines of Division and Persecution; (what promises are necessary, is further to be opened) nor is Re-ordination or Re-baptizing to be forced on the truly Ordained and Baptized.*

VI. *The*

VI. *The just Ordainers must needs be the discerning Judges whom they shall Ordain to the Ministry as such: And the Magistrate is Judge whom he shall approve and maintain as publick Teachers; and whom to tolerate, as tolerable: And every man is a discerning Judge to whom he shall trust the Pastoral care of his own Soul, as he doth what Physician he shall use for his Life; to which* Self-love *and* Self-government, *do* Authorize *and* Oblige *him; and no erring Judgment of Superiors can disoblige him; much less every Patrons Choice.*

VII. *Truly Ordained and Called Ministers, must Preach to their Flocks, though they have no other Licence; and are by Office Authorized to choose their Subject, due Method and Words: And if a Form of Liturgy in Prayers, Praise, Psalms, be imposed by Agreement or Authority, (that all the Church be not left at utter uncertainty what worship they meet to offer to God, till it be pass'd out of the Minister's mouth) let it be agreeable to Scripture-direction in Matter, Method, and Words; blameless, orderly, and without just cause of Suspicion or Offence; and let it not be made a Snare for Contention and Division, by the rigorous urging of needless things; nor worthy men be silenced and cast out, that cannot Declare, Assent and Consent to all things contained in it, and prescribed by it, by fallible men; nor for every omission or abbreviation, through scruple or necessitated haste; or for not officiating in a* Surplice: *And let the Canons* 6, 7, 8, 9. *and others that unjustly*

unjuſtly fetter the Miniſters and Flock, be Altered or Repealed.

VIII. *Let no Miniſter be Silenced, Suſpended, or Ejected for not publiſhing Excommunications paſs'd by Biſhops or Lay-Men, againſt any of his Flock (beſt known to the preſent Paſtor) whom he judgeth not guilty, or for ſcrupling a Ceremony, eſpecially upon ſuch Canons as the* 6, 7, 8. &c. *that Excommunicate,* ipſo facto, *every man (not excepting Parliament-men, Lords, Judges or Juſtices, Parents, or Wives, or Children,) that do but affirm,* " *That any thing is unlawful or re-*
" *pugnant to the word of God, in the Liturgy, or Ce-*
" *remonies, or Ordination, or in the Government of the*
" *Church, by Arch-Biſhops, Biſhops, Arch-Deacons, and*
" *the* Reſt that bear Office therein ;] *ſeeing Wiſe and Godly Miniſters judge ſuch things too light to deſerve an Excommunication, and dare not ſo diſhonour thoſe Superiors, whom God hath commanded us to honour ; yea, and think all Excommunicating,* ipſo facto, ſine ſententia Judicis, *to be ſinful, and contrary to the uſe of Excommunication, which ſuppoſeth Impenitence : And let no Miniſter or People be forced to publiſh or execute any Excommunication Arbitrarily Decreed, or againſt their Conſciences : And let none be forbidden to Preach the Goſpel, who do not more hurt than good, while Juſtice may be done by other Penalties.*

IX. *As Chriſtianity, Baptiſm, and Sacramental Communion are gifts from God, of unſpeakable value ; ſo none*

at age but willing Conſenters to the Covenant of God, can have any right to them : Therefore no unwilling perſon ſhould be forced to Baptiſm or the Lord's Supper, and ſo to profane Gods holy Ordinance, and corrupt the Church : But in each Pariſh the meer Auditors or Catechized, muſt be diſtinguiſhed from the Communicants ; as meer Catechiſing and Teaching is from Paſtoral Overſight, and Church-Conduct.

X. *The Kingdom conſiſteth of Miniſters and People* Approvable, Tolerable *and* Intolerable ; *though the publick* Temples *and* Maintenance *be at the Diſpoſe of the* Sovereign Power *and* Magiſtrates, *yet are not all* Laymen *that can but* Buy *or* Inherit a Patronage, Advowſon, *or* Preſentation, *either Authorized by God, or Qualifyed with ſufficient Wiſdom and Piety, to chooſe ſuch as* Paſtors, *to whom (though Ordained by a Biſhop) all men are bound to commit the Paſtoral care and conduct of their Souls (as is aforeſaid). Therefore to* this Relation, *the* Peoples Choice or Conſent *is neceſſary : And becauſe Pariſh Churches are by fixed Neighbourhood, the moſt convenient Order, the Rulers ſhould either make thoſe the* Publick Teachers, *whom the People can take for their* Paſtors, *or the People after take thoſe for their* Paſtors *who are truly Capable, whom the Rulers firſt chooſe for the* Publick Teachers : *But in caſe they cannot ſo agree, each man muſt be* Tolerated *to chooſe and join with ſome other (Parochial or more private) Miniſter for his* Paſtor ; *ſo be it,* 1. *They profeſs*

fess the essentials of Christianity, and Church Communion. 2. *And live peaceably and loyally, in their Preaching and Practice.* 3. *And pay the publick Teachers and Magistrates their dues; renouncing Heresie and Popery, and all Foreign Jurisdiction and Treason.*

The *TEST*, or Profession of the Maintain'd Ministers (supposing the amendments of Discipline.)

I Do sincerely, as before God, Profess, that I believe the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, to be the True Word of God, and (supposing the Light and Law of Nature) the Divine sufficient Rule of Faith and Holy Living, according to which we shall be Judged, which no humane Laws or Power can Abrogate or Suspend, being all but subordinate thereto. And I will Preach nothing as necessary to Salvation, which cannot be proved or warranted thereby.

And more particularly, I believe all the Articles of the Creed, called the Apostles, as a summary of our Faith, and Consent to the Lord's Prayer as the summary of our Desires, and to the Decalogue, as expounded by Christ, as the summary of our obedient Practice; and I resolvedly Consent to the Gospel-Covenant, with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which these summaries explain, and which is celebrated in Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

And I do own, and honour the Church of England, that is, This Christian Reformed Kingdom, containing the Approved Pastors and their Flocks; both the

Publickly Maintained, and the Duly Licenſed and United under one Chriſtian Reformed Sovereign, and Renouncing all Foreign Juriſdiction. And I do honour, with thankfulneſs to God, the Reformation and Concord of this Church, in Doctrine, Worſhip and Diſcipline, and will labour to preſerve its Unity and Peace, renouncing all Treaſons, Seditions, Popery, Foreign Jurisdiction, Hereſy, Schiſm and Prophaneneſs: And I do promiſe to Exerciſe my Miniſtry with diligence for the edification of the Church, and the ſaving of mens Souls.

The Miniſters being of three ſorts. 1. The *Maintained* or *Promoted*. 2. The *Licenſed* to *P*reach as *Candidates*, or *Lecturers* without the publick maintenance, or Helpers to Incumbents who deſire them, or occaſionally (ſuch as found *Proteſtants* continuing *Nonconformiſts* ſhould be). 3. The *Tolerated* that have only a *Grant of Protection* and *Peace*, without either *Maintenance* or *Approving Licence*. I leave it to Superiours how much of the aforeſaid *P*rofeſſion ſhall be required of the two latter.

This would much reduce the Kingdom to a Holy, and Happy Unity and *P*eace, which yet containeth nothing that *Proteſtants* have any juſt cauſe to reject: And we are not forward to meddle with more publick Church-matters without our Superiors invitation or conſent; but we may ſay that it is our judgment that theſe additions following would greatly ſtrengthen the Intereſt of Religion, Church and Concord.

I. *That the* Pariſh Churches *be acknowledged* True Churches, *and their* Miniſters *ſuch* Overſeers *as are neceſſary to* Eſſentiate *True Churches*; *that is*, *That all Presbyters be* Epiſcopi Gregis, *Overſeers of the Flock*, *and the* Incumbent *the* Preſident *among his* Curate Presbyters, *where there be ſuch*: *And that the* Dioceſan *is not the* ſole Eſſentiating Church

Church Paſtors ; *and the* Dioceſan Church , *the loweſt particular Church* ; *and the* Pariſh Aſſemblies, *but his Chappels or Parts of the loweſt Church* ; *and the Pariſh Miniſters, his Curates, and no true Paſtors.*

II. *That no Lay-Elder, Chancellor or Civilian, have or uſe the Decretive Power of Excommunication, or Abſolution, called the Keys.*

III. *That New, and more Peaceable Canons be made (inſtead of that Book, which now obtaineth) according to the Scripture Canons : Or that there be no Canons but Scripture, beſides Statute Laws.*

IV. *That Biſhops have no* Forcing *Power, nor the Writ* de Excommunicato Capiendo, *or any* Force *by the Sword, be* Annexed *to Excommunication as ſuch* ; *but that the Magiſtrates hear and judge before they puniſh* ; *and Obedience to Biſhops be unconſtrained and voluntary.*

V. *That Biſhops judge Church-Cauſes in Seſſion with their Presbyters, and not alone, nor with ſome few of their own Choice, or with Lay-men, but in regular Synods* ; *and Ordain thereby their conſent, and after ſufficient trial of them that ſeek Ordination* ; *(And ſo of Inſtitution.)*

VI. *That Dioceſſes be not greater than the Dioceſan is able to Overſee* ; *and that he forbid not the Pariſh Paſtors their particular works, but only uſe his general overſight and power on Appeals.*

VII. *That Biſhops oft viſit the inferior Paſtors and Churches, and inſtruct the* Juniors, *by direction and*

Ex-

Example how to Preach, and guide the Flock, and rebuke the Erroneous, Scandalous, Unpeaceable, and Negligent.

VIII. *That the Bishops be* Chosen *by the* Diocesan *Synod, and* Consented to freely without force, *by their City Flocks, where they reside, and Invested by the King, who hath the power of Temporal Priviledges.*

IX. *That the City, and neighbour Pastors be the Cathedral Dean and Prebends; at least where City Churches want maintenance; or that they ambulatorily Preach abroad where there is most need.*

X. *If Arch-Bishop* Usher's *Form or Reduction of Government to the Primitive state, or else King* Charles *the Second his Declaration about Ecclesiastical Affairs be but setled by Law, it will be a Healing and Great Reformation; inferiour Synods not hurtfully fettered being allowed under the* Diocesan *Synods: And whether the* Diocesans *be* Called *Bishops or Arch-Bishops as Successors to the Apostles and Evangelists, in the ordinary parts of their Office (a general care of many Churches) the name is to be left to each mans free judgment.*

As to the ignorant clamors for a real or seeming Re-ordination; 1. I have said so much against it in my *Treatise of Episcopacy*, and my *Disputation of Ordination*; in my Dispute of *Church-Government*, and my *Christian Concord*, that while the Objectors by Contempt refuse to read and answer them, it will be no cure of their pride and partiality to repeat the same again.

But

But I say, that I have fully proved (unanswered) that they that were Ordained by Synods of Incumbent Pastors, and specially those also then approved by the *Westminster* Assembly, had a better Ordination, and that by true Bishops, than either *Papists* or meer *English* Dioceſans that are not Arch-bishops can give: And yet they Re-Ordain not *Papists*.

1. Either they take the Parish-Churches (that is, the Pastor and Communicants distinct from the meer Auditors and Catechumens, and from the Aliens) to be true proper Churches in political Sense or not: If yea, Then those Churches have Bishops; For *Ecclesia est plebs Episcopo adunata, & ubi Episcopus ibi Ecclesia:* Their own principle is, That it is no proper political Church without a Bishop. Their are three degrees of Bishops. 1. All Presbyters are *Episcopi Gregis* (by the consent of *Papists* and *Protestants*). 2. The chief Incumbents that have Curates or may have, are *Episcopi Præsides*: The Ordination without Dioceſans was by these two sorts of Bishops. 3. True Dioceſans are Arch-bishops, *Episcopi generales plurium Ecclesiarum*; We refuse not their Ordination; but Men have true Episcopal Ordination without it.

But if they say that the Dioceſan is the lowest Bishop of a particular Church, and that the Parish-Incumbent Rectors are no true Bishops, and their Assemblies no true political Churches formed of Bishops, but only parts of one Dioceſan Church *infimi Ordinis*, we abhor such Tyrannical, Schismatical Dioceſans, and their pretence of proper power to Ordain; and the Primitive Church had never any such Ordainers or Bishops: And I advise all Ministers neither to be Re-Ordained by such, nor to yield to the appearance of such an evil, by coming under their equivocating imposition of hands; lest they take God's Name in vain, and harden *Papists* and *Church-Tyrants* in their false condemnation of the Reformed Churches. If it be want of a Legal Right in *England* that they pretend, let the Magistrate give you a Licence or Legal Right. I write not this for my own Interest, for I was Ordained by a Dioceſan, and am past all hopes or fears of Man.

CHAP

CHAP. LX. *The Reasons of these Ten Articles.*

L. *YOU must give me leave to tell you what Objections are like to be raised against your proposed Articles of Reconciliation. And first your own party will be unsatisfied in them, and so they will do no good, because here is not a word against Arch-bishops, Bishops, Deans, Arch-deacons, and the rest that bear office in their Courts, which yet is the thing that you your self seem most to dissent from, and which the Covenant did renounce.*

M. 1. We have so much swearing and unswearing and forswearing, that I will meddle as little as I can in things that look like Perjury. You know that as the last Generation was sworn against *Prelacy*, this new Generation is sworn to it: Yea in a manner the whole Land is sworn or covenanted *never to endeavor any alteration of it*: And how much soever I am against that Oath, yet I will meddle as little as I can in urging men to that which they take for Perjury.

And I have elsewhere told you that the Covenant renounced not all Episcopacy; many of the Assembly of Divines declared their dissent from any such renunciation, and had entred their protestation against it (as Dr. *Cornelius Burges* told me) had not the Explication been added, which confineth the Renunciation to the *English* frame. And that the present *Non-Conformists* would have thankfully received the primitive Episcopacy, they shewed by their motion, 1660.

2. We offer this form on supposition that we may not have what we think best, but what we can joyfully submit to, for our Concord and the Churches safety.

3. I have inserted those restraints of the hurt and abuse of the Diocesan form and their Courts, as may do much to secure Religion: And if they be kept from doing harm, we have most of our end. Their faults are not ours who cannot remedy them.

4. And you are mistaken in thinking that this form of Reconciliation will cause no Concord: Less was accepted with published Thanks to the King for his *Declaration*, 1660. And I believe that the *Dissenters* would be so few, as that the Concord of *Consenters* would render them inconsiderable, or uncapable of being dangerous to our peace.

L. *But*,

L. *But*, 1. *What makes you put in so much, that no body denieth? Do you not seem hereby to intimate unjusty, that all this is denied you?*

M. 1. I have no hope of Concord, but by disputing *ex concessis*, and improving mens own principles: Do you think I am so fooliſh as to expect that Adverſaries ſo fierce, ſhould change their Judgments by any thing that I can ſay, if their own Intereſt, or their own Principles by inference change them not?

2. We want nothing more in reality and practice, than that which is moſt granted us in ſhadow and general words; who grants not that we muſt obey God before Man? And muſt love God above all, our Neighbours as our ſelves, and muſt do as we would be done by? And muſt bear with and receive the weak, and perſecute none, *&c.* And if this were done, we were all agreed. O happy *England*, if all were granted practically and indeed, which men in general words approve! But if they *grant this*, and yet will not *grant it*, but ſeek to ruine them that ſeek it, are they not unexcuſeable?

L. *Why begin you with the qualifications requiſit to Baptiſm, as if you ſpake to Infidels?*

M. Becauſe I cannot build without a foundation: This is the chief thing neceſſary to our Reformation, that the Church may conſiſt of capable perſons.

L. *Why name you Parents and Pro-parents inſtead of God-fathers and God-mothers?*

M. Becauſe it belongs to him to covenant in the Childs name or behalf, whoſe *will* may juſtly go as for the Childs *will*; and that is they *whoſe* he is, and who have the power of him, and whom God hath commanded and authorized to this Office, and who are obliged to educate him and ſeek his well-fare: By *Pro-parents*, I mean ſuch as by *Adoption* or otherwiſe juſtly take the Child for *theirs*; which when Parents leave them Orphans is uſual. I ſay nothing againſt *God-fathers* as *ſeconds*, preſuppoſing this much.

L. *But I pray you who ſhall be Judge whether the profeſſion be* Underſtanding *which muſt be made by the* Adult, *or by the* Parent? *By this trick you will make the Prieſt the chief Governour of the Church; and he ſhall keep out whom he pleaſes, as for want of* Underſtanding *the words of the Covenant.*

M. 1. I confeſs that this is the firſt and moſt momentous part of the power of the Keys. But it tells us that it is not only Biſhops that have that power: But either ſome body or no body muſt have this power or truſt.

1. If *No body*; Turks, Heathens, Saducees, any may be Baptized though in ſcorn; and may be Members of the Church at pleaſure, and the Church ſhall indeed be no Church, being confounded with the World. A *Parrot* may be taught to ſay thoſe words. A man of a about Eighty years of age in the Pariſh where I taught, being asked who *Jeſus Chriſt* was, pointed to the *Sun* and ſaid, That was he; and ask'd, *Who was the Holy Ghoſt?* Said, he thought the *Moon*. What Wiſe Man will be the Paſtor of ſuch a Church?

2. Chriſt hath inſtituted an Office for this Judgment, and given them the Keys: Therefore there muſt be ſome ſuch Judge.

2. If *Some body*, who muſt it be? 1. If it be every Expectant for himſelf, it will be as before; and there will be no Church. Any Heathen may come in. 2. If it muſt be the *Magiſtrate*, you call him to attend this Service, and to teach and try all that are Baptized at age, and all Parents for their Children: And if you lay on him the *Paſtors* Office, you make him *Paſtor*. 3. If it muſt be the *Biſhop*, it is impoſſible, and no *Biſhop* will do it, when he doth not ſo much as know or ſee one of an hundred in his Dioceſs: It muſt then be the *Pariſh-Miniſter*, or *no body*.

3. Thoſe muſt be truſted with it whom Chriſt hath appointed for ſuch truſt: But that is the *Miniſters:* To them he hath committed the Keys of his Church or Kingdom.

4. Thoſe muſt be truſted with it, that muſt Execute it: It is the *Miniſter* that muſt *Baptize*: And therefore he muſt Judge *whom to Baptize*, or elſe he is but an Executioner, like one that waſheth any one that is foul; and not a Judge of what he doth, nor muſt anſwer for it.

5. The Univerſal Church ever ſince Chriſt's days hath agreed in this: And ſhall we now overthrow it?

And as to the exception againſt the *Power of the Paſtor.*

1. All power may be abuſed; ſhall we have no King, no Judge, or Juſtice, or Biſhops, becauſe they may abuſe their power?

2. It is ſo natural to men to conſult their own carnal Intereſt, which will here moſt lie in pleaſing the People, and ſloathfully to omit

omit so costly and troublesome a duty, that it's enough to foretel, that a hundred will sin in making the door too wide, for one that maketh it too narrow; and doleful experience tells us this: We are confounded by the contrary extream.

2. He that is refused wrongfully by one Minister, may find enough that will receive him.

3. We grant Appeals to Rulers, in case of Male-administration.

4. The setting open the *Church-doors* without an examiner, will be an hundred fold worse: And you must be like the Woman that would never have her House swept, lest her Servant should chance to sweep out a Pin.

What think you of all the antient *Churches* that taught the Adult long, as *Catechumens* before they would Baptize even them that begg'd it?

L. 2. *In your second Article again, you give the* Minister *a power to Judge of mens* Understanding: *But I need no farther answer to that.*

But do you not thus make Examination by Ministers *necessary to the Sacrament?*

M. I make it needful to *Confirmation* or *Adult-Communion*; but that is but once in a man's life.

L. *But is it not enough that Children own their Baptismal Covenant by* coming to Church, *and not* denying it, *without any* confirmation *or other* Profession?

M. Many come to hear that are no Christians; children are born in Nescience, and when they come to Age, must be made knowing *Christians*, and believe and obey for themselves, if they will be saved; and they cannot consent to their Baptismal *Covenant*, if they understand it not: This is the thing that hath corrupted the Church: Those that were *Infant-Christians*, and at Age, were no *Christians*, have filled many Congregations. Yet I confess that were *Confirmation* and Personal Tryal is by the sin of *Pastors* omitted, the peoples ordinary attendance at *Church* and desiring the Sacrament, is an obscure profession, and may serve to the *being* of a *Church*, tho not to the *well-being*.

L. *But some of your Non-conformists will as much blame you for requiring* too little *to Communion, in that you demand not an account of mens Conversation.*

M. 1. He that truly *consenteth to the Covenant of Baptism*, is *Converted* or *Sanctified*; and he oweth the *Church* no account

of that consent but his own profession, not nulled by *Word* or *Deed*. And if you forsake this Rule, you will never know what terms to take up with.

2. And as to the time or circumstances, whether God Sanctified him in Infancy and he grew up in Grace, or when, or how God wrought upon him, he oweth no account to others.

L. *In your third Article again, the chief exception will be against this trying men by the Minister for Communion.*

M. I have proved to you the necessity of it, *ad bene esse*. And may I not hope that the Bishops will be for it? When, 1. They order that the Bishop Catechize and send to the Bishop such as are to be Confirmed. 2. That he *give the Sacrament to none but those that are Confirmed, or are ready and willing to be Confirmed*: And how can they know this without Tryal? 3. When they know that the Bishops are not able to do it for all, or the hundredth part themselves. Why then should they be against it?

L. *If all the Bishops in* England *be for it, the Parish-Priests will some be unfit for it, and few will be at so much labour and self-denial as it will cost them.*

M. If the Bishops put or take in bad untrusty men, I cannot help that: Let them be encouraged to do well that will.

L. *But why must they make their Profession before others?*

M. Not but that the Pastors word may satisfie the Church, but it is much fitter, that he that is to have Communion with all, should be known to some besides the Minister, to be a professed Christian. I should have desired that it might be done as Baptism in the Congregation, as best, but that of these men we must ask as little as may be.

L. *But many ignorant people have not words to express their own belief or thoughts.*

M. It is not Ornamental unnecessary knowledge that must be demanded of them: They that want other words, may by *Yea*, and *Nay* make known their mind, when the Minister expresseth the matter in his question. And the Church requireth that they can answer as Catechised

L. *Some other will say that you are too lax in admitting all Confirmed formerly by Bishops, or by other Pastors.*

M. If we crave that each Minister may try his Flocks, we cannot in modesty refuse those tried and received by the Bishop or other Pastors. All Churches should live in such Communion with

with each other, as to receive each others Members on juſt occaſion, without trying them all again. And if Biſhops or any do it ſuperficially, that's their own fault.

L. *Why do you impoſe the Regiſtring of Communicants?*

M. I impoſe it not, but only commend it as a help to memory. He that hath no more Communicants than he can remember, needs it not. But Biſhop *Jer. Taylor* in his *Pref.* to *Treatiſe* of *Repentance*, ſaith, That a *man cannot take a Paſtoral charge, or give an account of them that he knoweth not.*

L. 4. *Your fourth Article ſets Miniſters on ſuch work as few can well do, and few will ever faithfully do. And yet for every young, raw Prieſt to have ſuch power, will never be granted by the Biſhops or the Laity.*

M. You may as well ſpeak out and ſay, that *Chriſt* hath appointed ſuch a Miniſterial Office as the World will never endure. Why then do they call themſelves *Chriſtians*? This is the proper work of a Paſtor, as it is of a Phyſician, to look particularly to the Sick, and not only to read a Phyſick Lecture to them. If Biſhops will put in ignorant lads or unfit men, I ſay again, we cannot help it; nor muſt we for that, deny the Miniſterial Office, any more than we muſt put down Preaching and Praying becauſe ſome are unfit. The weight of this work ſhould rather make all careful to get only fit men into the Miniſtry.

L. *But ſhall every Prieſt have power to put men from the Sacrament?*

M. if every Prieſt muſt Adminiſter it, he muſt Judge to whom: It is not a common Food for all, but the Childrens Bread. If every Prieſt muſt Judge whom to Baptize, ſo he muſt whom to give this Sacrament to. 2. The Cannons allow this to the ſcandalous, ſo we do but preſent them to the Biſhop or Chancellor; and it's leſs offenſive to ſuſpend them without ſuch proſecution. If he wrong any, they have their remedy.

L. *But why do you mention no more ſolemn Excommunication, but this Declarative one, and Suſpenſion?*

M. Becauſe I would ask no more than needs, of men that will not grant ſo much. And I know no juſt Excommunication but a Miniſterial declaring according to God's Word, that a man hath made himſelf uncapable of *Church-Communion*, and of the benefits of God's *Covenant*, and binding him over to anſwer his Impenitence at the Bar of God, and requiring the *Church* accordingly to avoid him.

L. 5. *The main charge will be against your fifth Article, that cuts off so many Oaths, Subscriptions and Professions.*

M. It's pity that these will not serve the turn, when as they are more than Christ, or his Apostles, or the Church for 300 years imposed. And yet must we have more, even as necessary to Ministry? Will not the Experience of 1300 years yet teach us to forbear tearing the Church by unnecessary snares? Yet I deny not but the Ordainers may try the ability of Ministers, in more than the words that they must Subscribe to: And if any will draw up such Articles as *none shall Preach against*, I oppose them not: The greater Concord the better: But we must not cause perpetual discord, by unskilful, and impossible terms of Concord.

See the Lord *Bacon* about Subscription in his aforesaid Considerations Dedicated to King *James*.

L. *But for ought I see, you will let in Papists if they will but take the Oaths, of Supremacy, and renounce all in general that is contrary to the Scripture and their Profession.*

M. And all Churches will let in *Heart-Papists* that renounce *Popery:* Who knows the Heart? But, 1. The Oath of Supremacy is a most express abjuring of the Essence of Popery; especially as extended against the Ecclesiastical as well as Civil Power of the *Pope*. 2. And is not God's Word a sufficient Rule of Religion? Deny this, and you will turn Papists to keep out Papists. 3. If it be, if Popery be against Scripture, it's here renounced: If not, why should we be against it?

L. *But should they not distinctly renounce Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Image-Worship, Merit, and the rest of their Errors?*

M. There is no end of enumerating Errors: They are numerous like Maggots in a Carcass. A thousand will be unnamed when you have done your best at it. But the *Rule* must not name every Error against it: The contrariety will be discernable. It is enough that men profess a *perfect Rule*, and *renounce all contrary*, and be *responsible to the Church* and their *Rulers* when they *corrupt Religion* contrary to the *Rule* and their own Profession. An Error manifested hurts not others, and none is punishable till proved. If Heresy be kept secret, the Church must not make new Laws and Tests to make men confess it; but punish it when it is vented.

L. *But shall Ministers make no Profession but what a Papist or a Heretick will make?*

M. No

M. No, if a Papist or Heretick will profess all that is necessary, else we must make more. Must we make new Creeds or new Scriptures as oft as Dissemblers will falsely profess that already made? This was the Temptation to those multitudes of Creeds, by which Councils distracted the Churches, which *Hilary* decryeth.

L. *But the Bishops will never take down the Oath of Canonical Obedience, and all the other Oaths and Subscriptions that are formed to their Interest.*

M I cannot help that: Over-doing is un-doing: If ever Episcopacy be cast out, it will be by such over-doing, which will not let men live in peace that would not molest them.

L. *Why do you seem to grant the Bishops and Patrons Votes in the Choice of Pastors, when before you seem to have much against them?*

M. I have nothing against the *Ordainers* Judging of the *fitness of the Ordained*, nor of *Magistrate* or *Patrons disposal* of *Temples* and *Tithes*: And because nothing but necessity will weigh down the great inconvenience of maintaining distinct Pastors, while a settled Lecturer hath the Temple and Tithes, therefore I suppose that the Bishop and Patron will have their Votes: And I suppose you know that it is vain to motion to Patrons to resign this power, were it worse than it is, else Advowsons would not be sold at such rates as they are by many Patrons: And my silence where speaking will do no good, is no sign of my approbation.

L. *But do you think that the* Communicants *shall have a* negative Vote *in choosing Pastors.*

M. I think they will not, till God raise up better men, than many Patrons are. But I am past doubt that God's Law of Nature and Scripture, and the whole consent of antient Churches, Fathers and Councils, are for it: And methinks, were not carnal Interest stronger with them than Religion, men that are professedly for God's Law, and Church-Canons and Customs, should not obstinately oppose them all: Yea, the highest Episcopal men are in this against them. Mr. *Thorndike* saith, that till the Clergy and People again choose their own Bishops, there needs no other reason to be given of the contempt of Episcopacy. Yea, I have proved past denial oft, that no Non-consenter can be a Member of any Pastoral Church, nor any man be a mans Pastor that doth not consent. It's reason then to speak for the Flocks *Consenting Vote.*

L. *But*

L. *But they may be forced to consent.*

M. I shall give you a reason against that anon.

L. *Do you think the ignorant vulgar are fit to choose themselves a Pastor? The most are usually the worst.*

M If the Church-men will make the uncapable Rabble *Communicants*, and then deny them *Church-Priviledges*, because they are uncapable, they condemn themselves for taking (yea forcing) in such *uncapable* men: Even as the Bishops that *Ordain* Ministers that *cannot Preach*, and then by their *Canon forbid them to Preach.*

2. And yet I will say, That I never knew any places, in City or Countrey, that have oft had better Pastors, for Learning and all Worth, than where the *Communicants* were the choosers: Yea, even the ignorant usually have a gust, that discerneth and valueth good and able men.

3. And yet, I speak not so high as for their power of *first Choice*, but only of *Consent*; nor yet to choose who shall be a Minister, but who shall be *their Pastor*. The Bishop asketh not their consent or *Ordination.*

L. *But you know that if there must three consents go to it: The* Ordainers, *the* Patrons, *and the* Communicants, *they may never agree,*

M. Humane faultiness puts inconveniences into all actions: But we must not cure it with a worse: If you would take no Physick till three Physicians agree, it's a less mischief than to give any man that can buy that Power, a right to impose what ignorant fellow or enemy he will, to be your sole Physician. Three Locks and Keys in three hands, to so great a Trust, may be better than one in an untrusty hand. Shall every Papist or Atheist choose me a Physician as fitter than I.

2. But if they should never agree, it is but every one stopping at his own part. The Ordainers have done their part; and the Patron hath chosen a Teacher for Auditors, and a Pastor for such as will accept him; and the People that trust him not, may go to one that they can trust; and this is better than worse.

L. *But the Patron will prevail against them, as long as he must Nominate, though the Bishop and People had a Negative Vote: for if they refuse one, he will still name another of his own Complexion.*

M. Un-

M. Uncurable evils I cannot help. I can but wish that no Patron had ever built Churches, or given Glebes at so dear a rate, as thereby to buy from the Church its Priviledges.

L. *But can you think that the Bishops will ever abate* Re-Ordination *of those ordained by Presbyters?*

M. I think not; and therefore I have no hope of concord by their Concession: But I know that former Bishops would have done it, and the Church of *England* still owned such since the Reformation; and God may send *England* such again; and for such an Age I write, and not for this with any great hope.

And if you would not have the Land confounded with doubts, whether they be Baptized, or whether they had any valid Sacraments, and whether the *Papists* or *Protestants* be the True Church, *&c.* it concerns you all to regard the decision of this Case. This wa ten 168

L. *But you speak only against* Re-Ordaining *those that are already Ordained, and nothing for the time to come.*

M. 1. You know it is hopeless to move for that. 2. And it's meet that Ordination should be well regulated. 3. And when all the unjust impositions are removed, as is here desired, few moderate men will scruple Ordination.

L. VII. *Your* 7th. *hath so much reason that I can say nothing against it, but that I doubt the Bishops will never abate their Ceremonies, or any parts of their Liturgy, so far, to endure any to disuse it, though they meddle not against it.*

M. I know what's necessary and just, but I know not what men will grant; I am of your mind of those in possession, except some few: But if any man will make and keep up any instruments of division and hurt, on pretence of concord or decency in God's Service, we can but wish and speak for better.

L. *But they say if nothing unlawful be imposed, it is disobedience to refuse it: And if disobedience be endured no Government can stand.*

M. 1. Judge by what is said whether *no Sin be imposed.*

2. Obedience to God being more necessary than to man, all just Rulers should encourage a due fear of sin, and do nothing that tempts men from obeying God.

3. God himself doth not silence, eject, or condemn men for all disobedience, else none could be Saved: All sin is disobedience to God. There is disobedience in small things as well as in great; and of ignorance and infirmity, as well as of malicious wilfulness: And what smaller matter can there be, than Humane Forms and Ceremonies? And where is ignorance more excuseable than in things so minute, and so uncertain and hard, that they must all be wiser than you and I that know them to be Lawful: And what Unity will be in that Church and Kingdom, that will endure none but such as are wiser than you and I?

L. 8. *Your* 8th. *Article preventeth all the Objections against Ministers Power and Liberty, while all are under Law responsible; But what if the Rulers be Bishops or men that distaste your desired Discipline?*

M. We are not choosing Rulers (by the Sword) but only Pastors to guide us by God's Word; and if we shall have bad ones, we must patiently suffer; we cannot remedy such infelicities.

L. *But both Papists and many others say, That the Judgment of Ministers Doctrine and Ministry, belongeth not to the Magistrate, but to the Church.*

M. Judgment is as various as *Execution, e. g.* If one be a Heretick or turbulent in Schism; 1. The *Magistrate* is Judge whether and how he shall be *Corporally Punished.* 2. The *Neighbour Churches* are Judges whether they will own his Communion as approved. 3. His own Flock are *discerning Judges*, whether he be fit to be trusted and owned as their Pastor, or to be forsaken by them.

We must not imitate Papists in exempting Ministers from the Magistrates Government.

L. 9. *I confess your Reasons against* Constraining Infidels *to* Profess Christianity, *are undeniable, and agree with the sence of the Antient Church and Fathers; But the Papists, and many Protestants hold, that when once men are Baptized, they may be forced to Communion and all other Christian Duty.*

M. What if they openly Apostatize and turn *Infidels, Jews,* or *Mahometans*; will they yet force them to Communicate in the Lord's-Supper?

L. *No, but they will put them to Death as they burn Hereticks.*

M. That's

M. That's their way, but not Christ's way. Why should they put Apostates or Hereticks to death, any more than Infidels that never believed?

L. *Because they break their Covenant; and because they sin against the Laws which they consented to.*

M. And doth not sinning against God's Law, in neither *Consenting* to, nor *Obeying* it, deserve as bad? If God, by many years Preaching, call one man to Christianity, and he derides it to the last; and another took it up but by Education and the Law of the Land, and never heard and understood the Reasons of it, and turneth from it, being taken Prisoner by the *Turks*, which of these is the greater sinner? God binds them to *Believe* and *Consent* that do not; and they sin against God's *Law*, which is more than to break their own *COVENANT* as such: But both these deserve Death and worse from God: But if it were Christ's way, to have men put one of them to Death, I see not but why they should do so by the other. Torment or Death, is no fitter way to make an *Apostate* believe, than other *Infidels*.

It's known that all the Antient Churches abhorred this forcing and punishing ways. I have wondered at the Impudence of *Baronius*, *Binnius*, and other Papists that justifie *Martin* for separating from the Commmunion of the BISHOPS that were for punishing the *Priscillianists* by the Sword, and Canonize him as a Saint, and condemn these BISHOPS for it, and yet are for far more Cruelties themselves, to far better men than the *Priscillianists*. But where Fleshly Interest is a mans Religion, no wonder if it have neither consistency with Reason nor Modesty.

L. *But if none but Volunteers be Christians or Communicant's, most will despise the Church, and it will be empty.*

M. All that are fit to be there, will come in: And those few will give the Pastors more comfort and lesser trouble than the multitude of the uncapable. If your Purse be not quite full of Gold, will you fill it up with dung or stones? The uncapable will do better for themselves, and the Church among the *Audientes* or *Catechumens*. It is their forcing in the uncapable, that hath corrupted the Church, and deprived the Flock of their due Priviledges (chooſing their Pastors, *&c.*) because it's made up of men unworthy of them. And doubtless if you but countenance and

prefer the Communicants before the reſt, it will draw in more than are capable, without force.

L. *If the Excommunicate be no further puniſhed, nor forced to repent, the Church cenſures will be deſpiſed: How little will men care for an Excommunication?*

M. This is commonly ſaid, and much of it is true: But 1. Can you force men to Repent, or rather Lye? You make him Repent that he brought himſelf into your hands and into ſuffering: But that is not to Repent of Sin. Will you tell a man before hand, *If thou wilt but ſay thou Repenteſt rather than lye in Gaol till death, we will pronounce thee abſolved and forgiven in Chriſts Name?* Who can think ill enough of ſuch an *Abſolution?*

2. Do not they ſcorn Chriſt that ſay he hath advanced his Church to the Dignity of Government, by putting into their hands a Reed for a Scepter, and a Leaden Sword that will do nothing without the Magiſtrate's Sword of Steel? Hath he ſet up an uſeleſs mock-power in the Church?

3. Did the primitive-Churches for 300 years uſe any Sword but Spiritual? Or did they find it ſo uneffectual and vain?

4. Yea for ſome hundred years after there were Chriſtian Magiſtrates, did not the Church abhor ſuch a thing as forcing the Excommunicate to repent by impriſonment or the Sword?

5. No man is meet to be a juſt Member that careth not for a juſt Excommunication? And ſtill this ſheweth what a wickedneſs it is to force in the unmeet, that deſpiſe God's Ordinance and the Church that they are in: And then God's Ordinance muſt be debauched for their unfitneſs.

6. The Sword doth the Keys much more hinderance than help, when it is thus annexed to them; for then it cannot be diſcerned whether Excommunication do any Good or none; or whether it be only the *Sword* that doth the cure: And do not they that profeſs Excommunication to be vain without the Sword, teach men to call them as Church Governours *Vain*, and to deſpiſe them? And is it not all one, as to ſay, if any good be done by Church Government, it is by the Magiſtrate's Sword, and not by ours by the Keys?

7. And is it not then ridiculous contradiction to diſpute ſo hard about Church-power, and againſt the Presbyters claim, when you confeſs that it is an uſeleſs ſhadow that you diſpute for, and it's not *it*, but the Sword that doth the deed.

8. Is

8. Is it not an odious defacing of Princes and Magistrates, to say, That they are bound to Imprison and Ruine a Man as a meer Lictor or Executioner of the Judgment of the Clergy, or of a Chancellor, without ever hearing or trying his Cause; and to punish him again, because they punisht him before, or because he hath not got their Pardon.

9. If Excommunication be grosly unjust (as against Christ's Members, for doing their Duty, or for common humane infirmity) they do well that set by it no more than it deserveth, and pretend not to repent when they do not, nor cannot, nor ought to repent.

L. *Though you call it no* Punishment, *to keep all the Non-communicants from publick Power and Trust, I think it will pass for a notable Penalty.*

M. I grand them as much as I can, as knowing how little they will yield to; and indeed it's my Opinion, That to deny all Non-Communicants Magistracy and publick Trust, would be to Reform the Commonwealth in the Foundation, if the Keys were but justly Exercised: But then by this I exclude, none but the *Intolerable*, that neither Communicate with the *Approved* or the *Tolerated Churches.*

L. *But Rulers will turn this against you, and shut out the* Tolerated *with the* Intolerable.

M. I cannot help that: Must I not tell Men what is *Right*, because they will do *Wrong*?

L. *But you are for having all the Subjects forced to be Catechised, and to be Auditors: And do you think that this will not force Nonconformists to hear against their Consciences?*

M. I say, not that they should be forced to hear in the *Parish-Church*; but either in a *Parish Approved* or a *Tolerated-Church*: How have they a *Toleration*, that may not *Hear* their *Tolerated Pastors*? And he that is not for *Hearing at all*, is not to be *Tolerated*: And indeed, if those that are no Members in Communion of any Church, but meer Catechumens or Auditors, should be forced to Hear in ther own Parishes ordinarily, if there be meet Teaching; I oppose it not.

L. *But is it not as injurious, to force men against their Consciences to* Hear *as to* Communicate.

M. No

M. No, the Case is greatly different. Nature bindeth all men to learn, that they may know what is good or evil to themselves. Learning and Knowledge is the common Duty and Interest of mankind; and though no man can be forced to *Believe* and *Repent*; he that is forced to hear, may hear that which may make him *Voluntarily* Believe and Repent: You must force your Children to Learn, but not to Communicate. I told you, That to give a man the Sacrament, is to give him a Seal'd Pardon and Gift of Christ and Life, which no unwilling man is capable of, but he may be capable to hear and Learn.

And this being only to those that are refusers of all Church-Communion, or are uncapable, and are in none, either *Approved* or *Tolerated*, what Conscience can such pretend against hearing, or against being restrained from Crimes and Prophaning Holy things, or reproaching Religion, though they be not constrained to what they are uncapable of?

L. *I am fully satisfy'd, that your way of dividing all the Subjects into the* Approved, *the* Tolerated *and the* Intolerable, *is of absolute necessity. And to conclude, I am satisfied, that you Non-conformists have a Cause so good, that you do well to suffer for it; but were I in your case, I know not what I should do my self. The Flesh and World are strong; and it's easier to be convinced that one should be a* Martyr, *than to submit to* Martyrdom: *God be merciful to our weakness.*

M. He trusteth not Christ, that thinks he shall be a loser by him; and he that will save his life from him by sin, shall lose it; and he that loseth it for him, shall save it.

L. X. *Your* 10th. *for some* Toleration, *will never be endured, though the Truth is, your Reasons for it are unanswerable, and your Limitations so strict, as prevent most of the Objections that might be made against it.*

M. God's Law requireth, *Forbearing* and *Forgiving one another*, and *Receiving the Weak in Faith.* And they that cannot *Tolerate* the *Tolerable*, methinks should fear the thoughts of Death, lest then God will not *Tolerate* them, but cast them out, as they cast out his Children.

L. *I confess you convince me, that know what most Patrons in* England *are, that it is unfit that all the Peoples Souls should be so far as the mercy of those Patrons, that seem to care but little for their*

their own, as that no man must have any other or better Pastor than they will choose for him; and that all mans Duty, to care for his Salvation, and all the Judgment of the Church of Christ, from the Apostles days, till a few hundred years ago, should wholly give place to the pretended right of any Fellow that buy an Advowson *or* Presentation: *And it were to be wisht, that it were wholly taken from them, and left to the Clergy and People alone; the* Magistrate *being Judge whom he will* Approve *or* Tolerate. *But there is no hope that Patrons will let go thier supposed Right, if an Angel from Heaven should speak against it; but in all reason they should grant the Communicants that small consequent Vote of Consent or Dissent, that you pleaded for; but if they will not do that, they should give them leave to go to another Parish, or to choose a* Tolerated Pastor *whom they will maintain. But men are so set on their own ways, that they Banish all sence of others Case, and of what conduceth to the common good.*

M. We can but bring the Truth to light, and shew a self-wounding people, the Balsom that must heal them, and stay till God will give them a heart to use it.

L. *But you are so careful, not to offend them by motioning too wide a Toleration, That I doubt it will do little good. For,* 1. *Some will scruple some of the Subscriptions, or Oaths, which, you grant, shall be imposed on them.* 2. *If all the Tolerated must be responsible for their Doctrine and* Ministration, *it's two to one, but the Rulers to whom they must give account, will be so contrary to them, that they will have no Peace or Safety.*

M. How would you have these Dangers and Inconveniences be avoided? An *unlimited Toleration* of the *Intolerable*, is it self *Intolerable*; and you can devise no safer limitation. The Engagements which they are to take, tell you the Terms of *Toleration*; and if men will Preach against those Terms, that is, against the Christian Faith, or the Holy Scripture, or their Allegiance to the King; or if they use their Meetings, to destroy Love and Peace, they ought to be restrained; and there are lower punishments, than depriving them of their *Toleration*, which are for lower Faults. 2. But if Rulers will oppress, we cannot help that, and must not therefore be ungoverned.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXI. *Whether the Extirpation of the Non-Conformists, be not rather to be attempted, than an Union with them by these means.*

This was written when the Duke of *Monmouth*'s Treason was most noised, and the *Dissenters* cryed down.

L. *IT's long since our former Conference; and now there is discovered a Treasonable Plot against the King and his Brother; and a multitude of Addresses tell us, that it was the* Plot of the Dissenters, *and the Product of* Conventicles, *and therefore crave the* Extirpation of them all; *and that they may no more be trusted, as having Principles were concileable to Monarchy and Subjection: and the loudest cry now runs that way.*

M. What is the Treasonable Plot?

L. *To kill the King and Duke, and raise an Army, and to change the Government, or Governours at least.*

M. Who do they mean by *Dissenters* or *Conventicles*?

L. *All that Conform not to the Church of* England *as it is now Settled by the Law.*

M. The Law settleth the Essentials, Integrals, and Accidents of the Church: Do you mean every one that disliketh any one Office, (as Lay-Chancellors use of the Keys) or any Ceremony or Form? If so, I do doubt most that come to Church and Communicate with it, Dissent from some such Circumstances.

L. *Well, suppose it be those that separate from it.*

M. There are now these following sorts of known Dissenters, called by many, Conventiclers.

I. Those that like the way of *Episcopacy* and *Liturgy best*, as here *settled*; but yet will also, occasionally joyn with other Churches, as the *French*, *Dutch*, *Lutheran*, or some Non-conformists.

II. The *Pacifick Non-conformists*, who at the King's Return, Petitioned for Arch-Bishop *Usher*'s *Model* of the *Primitive Episcopal Government*, and thankfully accepted the *King's Declaration.*

III. The *Presbyterians*, who are for Government only by Synods of equal *Presbyters* Teaching joyned with meer *Ruling* ones.

IV. The *Independants* and *Separatists.*

V. The *Anabaptists*, (who are half *Arminians*, and half not.)

VI. The

VI. The *Fifth-Monarchy* Party (moſt of which are *Anabaptiſts* alſo.)

VII. The *Quakers.*

VIII. The *Papiſts.*

IX. The *Infidels*, *Jews*, *Hobbiſts*, and *Atheiſts.*

Is the meaning, that all theſe are the guilty Rebels to be deſtroyed, or which of them is it?

L. *If all, I doubt the King would loſe no ſmall part of his Subjects: But you know the Papiſts are not numbered with the Diſſenters or Conventiclers.*

M. Say you ſo? Do thoſe that differ but about a Ceremony, or Lay-mans uſe of the Keys, or the largeneſs and paucity of Biſhops Churches, diſſent more from you than the Papiſts, that would bring King and Kingdom under a Foreign Juriſdiction, and introduce all the Maſs and Doctrinal Corruption of their Church. Read Biſhop *Downham's* Catalogue of *Popiſh Errors de Anti-Chriſto*, or Doctor *Willet's*, *Chamier's*, *Jewell's*, or any ſuch, and Judge.

And do you think that the Maſs is no *Conventicle*, or more Lawful than the forbidden Aſſemblies of Proteſtants?

L. *Well, but it's* Proteſtant-Diſſenters *that I mean.*

M. So then, you would have *Proteſtant-Diſſenters* rooted out, and not *Papiſts* or *Infidels?*

L. *We would have thoſe rooted out which were in the Plot, which the* Papiſts *were not.*

M. No doubt but ſuch a *Plot* as you deſcribe, deſerveth the Extirpation of thoſe that were guilty of it: But I pray you compare not the Innocency of *Papiſts in their Principles*, with the *Proteſtants:* Or read Biſhop *Barlow's* and *Henry Fowlis's* Books, and *Prin's* Hiſtory of Biſhops Treaſons, and Judge as you ſee cauſe. But it's none of my buſineſs now to accuſe the *Papiſt.* Do but grant that the Innocent ſhould not ſuffer for the crimes of the guilty, and we are agreed.

L. *But is it not juſtly ſuppoſed, that the whole* Party *is guilty of thoſe Principles which have cauſed particular mens Rebellions; and that it is their Preachers and Conventiclers that have cauſed all?*

M. You that are a Lawyer ſhould know ſomewhat of the Rules of *Juſtice*, or *Humanity* at leaſt. Come on, and let you and I conſider ſoberly of the caſe.

And firſt, to your face I challenge you to name and prove *any*

the leaſt difference between the *Non-conformiſts* who ſought for Concord at the King's Reſtauration, or the Party of meer Non conformiſts, and the Proteſtants of the Church of *England*, in their Principles about the *Power of Princes*, and the Subjection and Patience of the People. Name any difference if you can?

L. *You would make one believe that great Numbers are inhumanely impudent, that charge them with ſuch heinous difference, if there be none.*

M. Why do you not name the difference if there be any? Contrarily, 1. We all take the ſame *Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy.*

2. We Subſcribe all the ſame *Articles of Religion* about the *Power of Magiſtrates.*

3. We have often profeſſed our conſent to all that is written for Magiſtracy and Subjection in all the Scripture, in any General Council (ſave what is for the Papal Tiranny over Princes and People) or in any *Confeſſion of any Chriſtian Church, Greek, Papiſt*, or *Proteſtant*, that ever we ſaw; and for all that (for the power of King's, but not *all againſt it*) which the generality of Fathers, Hiſtorians, Philoſophers, Politick-writers, Lawyers, Canoniſts, or Divines are for. And is not all this yet enough?

4. I have oft told you where; *e.g.* Biſhop *Andrews in Tortura Torti*, Sir *Francis Bacon*, Lord St. *Albans*, and many others, have vindicated the principles of the *Engliſh Non-Conformiſts*, as the ſame with the Church's in point of Loyalty againſt the *Papiſts* Accuſations.

L. *But do not you know who Wrote the* Political Aphoriſm, or Holy Commonwealth, *Condemned lately by the* Oxford Convocation?

M. And do not you know, 1. That the Author had never leave to confute his Accuſers about it?

2. Do you not know that he hath divers years ago, Written a large Book called his *Second Plea for Peace*, fully opening the principles which he and his Conſenters hold; and no Man hath Written one word againſt any of them, that I hear of, to this day? Is this fair dealing then, to ſilence what at large he owneth, and name only a Writing Twenty Nine years ago, which he never was heard about?

3. Do you not know that the Famouſly Learned *Tho. White*, a *Papiſt*, wrote at the ſame time the like Doctrine, and will you charge that on the *Party of Papiſts*?

4. The

4. The Hiſtorians Rule is *Diſtingue de temporibus*, do you know in what times that was Written? And know you not that few Men then living, Wrote and Spake more plainly againſt the Uſurpation than he did?

5. And you ſee that the *Oxford Convocation* condemn the Writings and Principles of the Doctors of the Church of *England* as well as others? And as for *Knox* and *Buchanan* we are no more guilty of their words than of *Jewel's*, *Bilſon's*, *Hooker's*, *Laud's*, or any ſuch.

L. *But if you differ not from the Church of* England *in principles of Loyalty, why do you not take the* Oxford-Oath *in the Act of Confinement, and the* Subſcription *in the Act of Uniformity?*

M. I have told you fully before: Not becauſe we differ in Doctrine, but in Expounding the words of that Oath and Subſcription.

2. Were neither Arch-Biſhop *Abbot*, nor his Clergy, nor the Parliaments of thoſe times of the Church of *England*, as well as *Sibthorp* and *Mainwaring*? Were not the Laws made by thoſe Parliaments, made by the Members, if not Repreſentatives of the Church of *England*? You know that our late great Defenders of the Church, deſcribe the Church of *England* to be *Thoſe that Worſhip God according to the Law*: And were the Parliaments that made thoſe Laws, none of the Church themſelves?

Chillingworth would not Subſcribe without a limitting profeſſion: Was he therefore none of the Church?

Was Biſhop *Bilſon* none of the Church? Was *R. Hooker* none of the Church? The firſt Dedicated his Book to Queen *Elizabeth*, and the latter is Dedicated to our King *Charles* the Second, and praiſed by his Father. And yet the Author of the *Holy Commonwealth* hath larglier than any Man confuted *Hooker's Popular Principles*.

When *William Barclay*, a Lawyer defended the King of *France* his Temporal Power, againſt the Popes Uſurpation of a Power to Depoſe and Reſtrain him, he is fain to profeſs that the contrary Opinion was ſo common, that he was taken to ſpeak ſome ſtrange and ſingular thing. And yet none doubts but he was of the ſame Church of *Rome*.

I again challenge you to name that point in which we differ in this Doctrine from the true Church of *England*.

L. *You hold that Kings may be reſiſted by Arms.*

M. Not so much as the aforesaid Bishop and Doctors of the Church of *England* did, or the *Parliaments* that made Church Laws. Again, See our *Second Plea for Peace*; how far we disclaim it. I profess that I am acquainted with no meer Non-conformist Ministers, that hold it at all lawful for Subjects to resist the King, or any Supream power by a War; except in case that he notoriously declareth that he will if he can, destroy the Commonwealth, or deliver it up to a Foreigner or destroyer that hath no Right.

L. *Sure the cry would never be for Extirpating the Dissenters, for this Plot and their disloyalty, if they were not guilty.*

M. Nay, if that be your Argument [*Strangers to them say they are disloyal and guilty*; Ergo *they are so*] I leave you to Gods answer, for I will not undertake to answer you.

But will you use Sobriety a little further?

2. It is now Twenty Seven Years since they were ejected and cast out of Maintenance and Countenance, and left to beg or crave their Bread: long have they been laid in Goals, and Fined deeply, the *Law* laying on them Twenty and Forty pound a Sermon: Their Goods, Beds, Books, taken from them, and they left destitute: How many in all these years, have ever been accused and proved guilty of one disloyal or seditious Sermon or Word? I know of none: certainly it was not for want of will in the Accusers. Those that by Oaths have brought them under Convictions and Warrants for distress five, ten, and much more Forfeitures, even divers hundred pounds at once, before they were ever summoned to speak for themselves; would sure have Swore some disloyal words against them, had they been able. And can many hundred Ministers have a fuller proof of their Innocency, than that they had no such prosecution twenty seven years from such a sort of Adversaries, in so great Sufferings?

2. And now this *Plot* is detected, it is divers months since, and many Countries and Corporations have accused the *Dissenters* of it, and cry them down to Extirpation: And to this day I cannot hear of any one *English* Minister (or at most not of two) that is either an Episcopal or Presbyterian Non-conformist, so much as accused, or made as guilty.

The *French* and *Dutch* Churches in *London*, are dissenting Presbyterians. Yet no Man accuseth any of them for being in Plots; and yet must they also be destroyed?

But

But, Sir, if any one or more of the *Episcopal* or *Presbyterian Non-conformists*, *Ministers* or *People*, had been found guilty, would you condemn thousands (or any) of the guiltless for their sakes? On what account: Is it for their Relation to them? They are mostly strangers to one another. Come, and let us try your Rule of Justice.

I. Is there any Relation nearer than that of *Father* and *Son*? And can any Minister be supposed to have more interest in, or influence on his *Hearers*, than a *Father* hath on his *Son*? And you know that the chief man accused is the *Kings eldest Son*: I hope you will not for this, *charge the King*, as if he principled him for Treason against himself: Nor as if he were to suffer for his Sons faults.

II. The Judges have oft declared that many *Jesuits* and *Papists* were Plotters and Traitors, and they died for it. I hope you will not make all *Papists* guilty of their crime, nor extirpate them for it. And yet the *Papists* are Conventicling *Dissenters* too.

III. The Lords and great Men accused of this Plot and Treason (how justly God knoweth) were of the Church of *England*; and shall all the Church of *England* be destroyed for their sakes?

Doctor *Whitby*, and others now blamed by the *Oxford*-Convocation; and Bishop *Bilson*, Mr. *Hooker*, *&c.* were of the Church of *England*; and shall all the *English* Clergy be accused of their words?

IV. Many of the accused were *Hobbists* and Infidels, and some common ill-living Protestants: Shall all the *Hobbists*, and Infidels, and ill-living *Protestants* be Extirpated for their faults?

V. Many Gentlemen of some late *Parliaments* are accused (not yet tried, and proved guilty): Shall all the *Parliament-men* therefore be Extirpated as guilty?

VI. Some *Lawyers* and *Students* at Law are accused: Shall all *Lawyers* and *Students* therefore be Extirpated?

VII. Divers of the Nobility are accused: Must all Noblemen be therefore reproached?

VIII. Some that have been of the Kings *Privy* Council were accused: Is his Council therefore to be disgraced or destroyed?

IX. For-

IX. Formerly many Judges have been guilty : Are Judges therefore to be dishonoured ?

X. By this justice you may next conclude, They were *Englishmen* that were accused, therefore let all *Englishmen* be rooted out : Or they were *Protestants* and *Christians*; therefore away with all *Protestants* and *Christians* : Whereas I think it an unjust conclusion, that because they were *Irish-men* and *Papists* that murdered two hundred thousand in *Ireland*, therefore root out all *Irish-men* and *Papists*; unless you will infer, *They are men* that commit all sin ; therefore root out mankind.

If it had been men that *hate serious Godliness*, and are the seed of the *Serpent* and of *Cain*, that are at deadly enmity to the true fear of God, and thirst for the blood of the innocent, that are accused of this Plot; and if people had petitioned to have all this sort of men rooted out for it, it would have fallen on more than you and I are willing to name, or to have destroyed.

But can you bear with me if I tell you truly and plainly what this *Extirpating motion* of all called *Dissenters* and *Conventiclers* signifieth, and what it tendeth to ?

L. *I have had so much reason from you, as obligeth me to hear what you can further say.*

M. I. The Motion is so apparently from Satan, that it will tempt those that are Christians indeed, and know the devil's Will and Works, to take you for no other than his listed Souldiers against Christ, if you set your selves to do this work. *Truth*, *Love*, and *doing Good*, are the Christian State and Life. *Lying*, *Hatred* and *Hurtfulness* are Diabolism, or Satans work and image. All the Art of prating and deceit of Clergy or Laity in the World, will never so far blind true Christians, but that by your *Fruits they will know you.* The pricks of *Thorns* and *Thistles* will be known from *Grapes* and *Figs*, in despight of all the craft of Diabolists. And if Children know not a *Wolf* in *Sheeps-cloathing*, they will know him that see him tear the *Flock*; yea, or that see his bloody jaws

And are you willing to renounce Justice, Humanity and Christianity, and openly to profess Diabolism ?

Men will see how malignity greedily picks quarrels with honest innocent men, while it beareth or cherisheth the debauched, ungodly, unconscionable rabble, whose God is their Belly, or the World.

And

And methinks men, ſo proud that they cannot bear with any that differ from their ignorant dictates, ſhould ſcarce be willing that Hiſtory ſhould liſt them among the *Cainites* or *Diaboliſts*, any more than among man-eating Canibals.

II. You cannot extirpate or deſtroy all *Diſſenters*, if you do your worſt. 1. So great a number will be true to their Conſciences, and ſuffer what ever you inflict on them, as will take you up much time and trouble, and render you more odious to the reſt.

2. The common people that were indifferent, will enquire what theſe men have done, and will be turned from thoſe that afflict ſo many of the innocent; eſpecially their neighbours, who know them better by Experience, than by your Reports.

3. Thoſe that fill not Priſons, or die not as Martyrs, will but *Conceal* their Minds, and not change them. And they will then be out of the reach of your hurting power: When they communicate with you, and give you no outward matter of accuſation, what can you do to them? Or what pretence can you find to extirpate them? The heart you know not: Their actions they will keep out of the reach of the Law: If you try them by *Oaths* or unjuſt Profeſſions, by increaſing the number of Sufferers, you will increaſe your infamy and odium: And they that for fear do ſwear againſt their Judgments, will hate you the more when they feel their wounded Conſcience ſmart.

4. And if you force them into ſecrecy, they will there ſpeak more freely, and will Educate their Children into a hatred of your ways. And if you could deſtroy them, two for one will ſpring up as their Succeſſors.

Who would have thought that the great *French* Maſſacre ſhould have rather increaſed than diminiſhed the Proteſtants? Or that Queen *Mary*'s Bone-fire ſhould have extinguiſhed Popery? Or that the two Hundred Thouſand Murdered by the *Iriſh* ſhould but have haſtned the overthrow and ruine of the Murderers? In ſhort, you cannot Extirpate them.

III. The more you attempt it, and the more you ſucceed, the more you will do *againſt your ſelves*.

1. Is not the King more ſafe, and ſtrong, and honourable, and eaſie when he hath the Hearts of all his Subjects, than if he rule a People by diviſions and perſecutions ſhattered like a broken Glaſs, or living in proſecution or fear, and hatred of one another,

as

as if they were ſtill in a ſtate of Hoſtility, and lived among their dangerous Enemies? If either Chriſt or Satan be to be believed, a divided Kingdom in Enmity cannot ſtand.

L. *Methinks you argue againſt your ſelf: For therefore it is that we would have all Diſſenters rooted out, becauſe of the danger of diviſion by tolerated Diſſenters.*

M. Had you read a Book called, *The Samaritan*, and another called, *The True and only Terms of Church-Concord*, you would need no further anſwer to that Objection. If you would have all of *one mind and way*, it muſt be in that which it is *neceſſary* and *poſſible* for all men to agree in, and to make things *unneceſſary* or *impoſſible* your terms, is the certain way of pernicious diviſion. Will you extirpate all that diſſent in Controverſies of Law, of *Philoſophy*, *Aſtronomy*, *Phyſick*, *Grammar*; or that differ in Reaſon, Conſtitution, Statute? *&c.* Do you think that all will conſent in all the Myſteries of Divinity, while knowledge is ſo low and rare? Yea, do you think that even in Circumſtances and things doubtful, all good Chriſtians will ever be ſo much of one meaſure of Knowledge as to agree? How happy are we if we all agree in great, plain, neceſſary things? But to underſtand alſo all little Circumſtances, and humane Orders and Phraſes; which be lawful, and which not, ſuppoſeth all Plow-men, Tradeſ-men and Work-men, to be far more perfect in the knowledge of Divinity, than the moſt learned Philoſophers are in Phyſicks, who agree in little but a few principles, and things within the reach of ſenſe: When yet alas, we can ſcarce teach half the vulgar, the meaning of the Creed, or Baptiſmal Covenant.

If the King would extirpate all Lawyers, Phyſicians, or Philoſophers, who in a multitude of little and controverted Points, cannot tell which ſide is in the right; he may have ſo much the more ſucceſs in it, by how much the more men will be bold to diſſemble their opinions in matters of ſuch a nature. But about the matters of God and Salvation, Conſciences will be more afraid to ſtretch and diſſemble. It's far leſs Wiſe to take this way, than for School-maſters and Tutors to deſtroy or caſt out all Scholars and Pupils, that have not juſt the ſame degree of knowledge.

And at what Age muſt this perfect knowledge begin, which muſt extend to the moſt minute things that men will command? At Sixteen years of Age you compel them, *volentes*, *nolentes*, to receive

ceive the Lords Supper; and do you think then that all at Sixteen years old, in *England*, ſhould be preſumed to know more of the Lawfulneſs of all your Impoſitions on them, than I can reach to know at Sixty Eight (now near Seventy Four) after the long and hard Study of my Life? If you compel no more Men, Lads or Women to Communicate, but ſuch as really underſtand the Lawfulneſs of all ſuch Impoſitions, which I judge unlawful, ſure it will make a great change in your Communion and Courts.

L. *By this talk you ſeem to intimate, that the people muſt not be conſtrained to obey in Circumſtantials or Little things, becauſe they may to them be doubtful; and what worſhip of God can you perform without ſuch little Circumſtances?*

M. Little or Great, God in Mercy hath made all *Neceſſary* things intelligible and plain: It is the *Unneceſſary* things that are moſt controvertible and doubtful. There are many *Circumſtances* that are ſo *Neceſſary* to actions, that they cannot without them be performed; *e. g.* He that will Preach, muſt open his mouth; he muſt ſpeak audibly, he muſt uſe a Language underſtood, he muſt have ſome capable Place, and convenient Time; Pſalms muſt be ſung in ſome Tune, *&c.* ſome Cloathing, ſome poſture of Body muſt be uſed; and all men know that to chooſe theſe according to the general Rules of Charity, Edification, Order, and Decency, belongs to the Guides of the Aſſemblies. And where do you ſee any great diviſion about any ſuch things as theſe; except in caſes of accidental ſcandal?

And if any ſhould be ſo childiſh or ignorant, as to think it unlawful; *e. g.* to be *Uncovered*, or to *Kneel at Prayer*; due Inſtruction, and gentle Rebuke may eaſily cure ſuch weakneſs, and is meeter than an Extirpation. If any were ſo ſilly that they ſcrupled; *e. g.* ſinging our Metre or Tunes of *David's* Pſalms, but are only for the Cathedral ſinging of the proſe; it's fitter to let them be *ſilent*, or let them go only to Cathedrals, than to Excommunicate or Deſtroy them; and if any be ſo weak, that they think a *Lawful Form* or *Geſture* unlawful, it's fitter, if they cannot be convinced, to let them be ſilent, or Worſhip God among themſelves in another Form or Geſture, than to Excommunicate or Extirpate them.

But what are these easie intelligible Circumstances to all the Ceremonies unnecessary even *in genere*? What are they to the Vows of God-fathers without the Parents, or to the dedicating Symbol of the Cross, or to adhering to a bare Reader, when the next Parish hath an able Teacher whom the ignorant have great need to be instructed by; to say no more now of all the Oaths, Declarations, Subscriptions, Covenants, and Professions required of Ministers? I again say therefore, if you Extirpate all Subjects that cannot unite with you in all things required by the Rubricks and Canons, you will wrong the King by weakning his Kingdom, and robbing him of more of his Subjects, than He or the Welfare of the Land can spare.

And you will keep the Kingdom in a state of Division (and like *Antioch*, that was so oft and terribly shaken by Earthquakes, that it was in continual danger of ruine) and even honest *Trajan* lodging there, did hardly scape through a window, while the falling houses kill'd his Souldiers.

And the Dissenters are not all of one mind and temper. All that are wise and good, will suffer patiently and peaceably; for I incline to think, that the Expositors mistake, who apply *Solomon*'s words to *Sufferers* [*Oppression maketh Wise men mad*]; and that as some Criticks tell us, it rather meaneth *Rulers* [*that an affectation of an oppressing power, and the exercise of it, maketh wise Rulers forget the very obvious Reasons of Morality and Interest, and to act as men distracted.*] But there be Dissenters of *dangerous Principles*, which are fitter to be *restrained*, than by *desparation* to be *enraged*; as hap is, the *Behmenists* and *Quakers* are *against War*, and the *old Anabaptists* were so reported; but some of them have shewed a contrary judgment; but its known past doubt, that the *Papists* are a sort of Dissenting Conventiclers, who have so strong a back beyond Sea to encourage them, and are so instructed by multitudes of learned Clergy-men and Friars, and so taught by General Councils, which are their very Religion, that many of them will think it Merits Heaven to kill such Kings as would Extirpate them.

King *James* is deeply censured by some, for doing so much as he did towards a Toleration, and for what the *French* Bishop of *Ambrun* writes of him. But for my part I verily

verily believe that he did it in fear to ſecure his life ; when Queen *Elizabeth*'s death had been ſo oft attempted, and when two great Papiſt Kings of *France*, had been murdered, becauſe they were not zealous enough for the Pope, and that ſo deſperately by ſingle men, that did it to merit Heaven ; and when he had ſo narrowly eſcaped the horid *Gun-powder Plot*, and when they ſtill told him that he ſhould not eſcape ; what wonder if he were afraid ?

And ſo great confidence have the Papal Clergy, in this terrifying of Kings as in conſtant danger of death, if they be againſt their Church, that the Pope and his cloſe Adherents could never to this day be procured to diſown the Decree of *Lateran*, and other Councils for Depoſing Excommunicate Heretick Princes; no, nor to deny the lawfulneſs of killing ſuch; yea, even in *France*, *Perron* himſelf, their Learned Cardinal, ſo defends the Pope's power of Depoſing Kings that deſerve it, that (in his *Oration to the States*) he profeſſeth, That, if it be not true, the Pope is Anti-Chriſt, and the Church Anti-Chriſtian that hath ſo long owned and practiſed it.

L. *You ſeem to intimate in all this that you would have the Papiſts Tolerated, for fear leaſt they ſhould kill the King ; and ſo the worſe that Men and their Principles are, the more they muſt be Tolerated for fear of them : But who lived in greater ſafety than Queen* Elizabeth *who ſuppreſt them, even when the Pope had Excommunicated her ?*

M. I would have the King and Kingdom (Church and State) ſecured from a *Foreign Juriſdiction*, of *Pope* or *Prelates* ; and to that end, I would have *Papiſts kept out* of *Government*, *Civil*, *Military* or *Eccleſiaſtick* ; and I would wiſh that the King, 1. By the *Unity of his Subjects* ; 2. By *Navies* and *Military proviſion* ; 3. And by juſt *Confederacies* abroad, be ſtill ſo ſtrong as not to fear the force of Foreigners ; and theſe things being ſecured, without fear of any mens cenſure, I ſay,

1. That I would have all Men uſed as Men, and all *peaceable men* as *peaceable*, be they what they will.

2. I would have *no hurt done to any Papiſt for his Religion*, but *Defenſive* ; that is, ſuch as is neceſſary to the foreſaid Ends, *viz.* to

ſave King and Kingdom from a foreign Juriſdiction, and from Invaſion, and to ſave the Souls of the people, from Subverſion by unreaſonable liberty of Seducers.

3. I would not have puniſhments *exceſſive*, that ſhall drive multitudes into Deſperation: Leſt undone deſperate men be carried to Revenge, or to think Treaſon lawful, when they can no otherwiſe be ſaved from Death and Ruine.

Man hath not a deſpotical power over all paſſion: And ſome paſſions do almoſt neceſſitate Error of Judgment, or elſe ſudden Action againſt Judgment. Take the moſt meek Conſcientious man, that knoweth the evil of Revenge, and try his patience by buffetting him, and it's two to one, but paſſion will make him ſtrike you again. Much more if you buffet him twenty year every day, patience may be overcome at laſt: There is ſcarce any Creature, Beaſt, Bird, or Vermin, but will uſe all the reſiſtance it can in caſe of hurt and fear of death. The Devil could ſay, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his Life.* And can you think that Prince or Kingdom is in ſafety, that ſhall deſtinate to deſtruction ſo great a number and of ſuch quality, as are all the *Papiſts*, *Infidels*, *Jews*, *Anabaptiſts*, *Independants*, *Presbyterians*, and *Epiſcopal Non-conformiſts*, as are in *England*? Though I think the latter ſort would ſuffer death rather than be diſloyal; I am ſure Rulers and Adverſaries think not ſo, who accuſe them of intolerable diſloyalty. And they that think ſo ill of them will expect ill at their hands.

It's true, that the worſe men are and their principles, the more need there is of ſuppreſſing them. But deſtroying them is the chief means that I know to increaſe their principles of reſiſtance. It's ordinary with men that never ſuffered, to deteſt reſiſting Governours; and to change their Opinions when they think they are implacably hunted to deſtruction without deſert or any remedy. Draw your Sword upon them, even on a *Quaker*, and it's two to one you will change his judgment, and make him think that ſelf-defence is lawful. Yea, if you could kill all that think reſiſtance lawful, (if it be half the Kingdom) it's the likelieſt way to make all the reſt that ſurvive of the ſame mind, becauſe of the inhumanity of the Execution. I have met with few that thought that reſiſtance

siſtance at the *French* Maſſacre on *Bartholomew-day*, or at the greater in *Ireland*, had been unlawful, whoever commanded them.

Yea, the Lord *Bacon*, Chancellour of *England*, in his Diſcourſes of a *Holy War* againſt the *Turks*, and of a *War with Spain*; thought that their barbarous Cruelties (though the *Turks* give *Liberty of Conſcience*) allow other Princes to War upon them to vincicate mankind, the World being one Kingdom of God in which every man oweth Charity and due help to others; which is honoured in *Tamerlane*, when he relieved the *Greek* Emperour of another Religion againſt *Bajazet* that was of his own, and this in meer Humanity and Charity.

I meddle not with the caſe of the lawfulneſs of ſuch actions. But I ſay, All the World cannot deviſe a more effectual way, to make all men think that *Self-defence* is *Lawful*, than by great cruelty againſt multitudes to make it ſeem *neceſſary*.

And if you will cure it by *forced Oaths*, I heartily wiſh the King better ſecurity for his Life, and the Kingdom for its Peace, than mens Conſcientious keeping of thoſe Oaths will be, unleſs Conſcience and Patience were more univerſal and powerful than they are, and would make all ſorts of *Diſſenters* chooſe Martyrdom, rather than defenſive reſiſtance.

And as for Queen *Elizabeth*'s Caſe, her Dangers were many, her Advantages were great, her Executions for Religion were ſo few, that the Lord *Bacon* and many others ſay, none ſuffered for any thing but Treaſons or ſuch crimes: And God did wonderfully preſerve her.

But to ſay no more of the Papiſts whoſe caſe quite differs from all the reſt, if you will make many Laws about doubtful Words, and Forms and Ceremonies, and then extirpate all ſober, godly, peaceable Subjects, that for fear of ſinning againſt God dare not obey them, what do you but mince and pulverize the Nation, and diſſolve its conſiſting and ſtrength. and make it a Cock-pit, or a prey to the cloven-footed deceiver and divider.

The Non-conformiſts in *England* lived quietly till the *Canons* were made for their proſecution. The great Counſellours of State, (Sir *Nic. Bacon*, *Throgmorton*, Sir *Amias Paulet*, the Earl of *Leiceſter*, Sir *Francis Knowles*, Sir *Francis Walſingham*,

Walsingham, Secretary *Beal*, &c. except *Hatton* and *Whitgift*, were for lenity; yea for such abatements as might have caused Unity: And Sir *William Cecil*, Lord *Burleigh* (though for Episcopacy) almost fell out with Arch-Bishop *Whitgift* for his hard usage of the Non-conformists. And were all these Fools, and you only the Wise Men? But when *Bancroft*, lest they should increase, would Ruine them, and the Canons were made, which *ipso facto* Excommunicated all people in the Land, High or Low, that did but affirm, That any thing in their Liturgy, Articles, Ceremonies, Ordination, or Church Offices (from the *Arch-Bishop* to the *Apparetor*) was repugnant to the Word of God, the Church and Kingdom presently felt that *solutionem continui* which these tearing Racks had made: And when all must be ejected and silenced, that durst not Subscribe that [*There is nothing in the Liturgy contrary to the Word of God*] (which I would not say of the *Bible* it self as in any one Translation) then our over-zealous Uniters tore all to pieces, and the shreds could never to this day be well set together to make one piece.

Yea, all the *Parliaments* of *England* have still been striving to Restore the Concord of *Protestants* by laying by some of these Dividing, Tearing Engines: But *Whitgift* (though too Great and *Anti-Arminian*) and *Hatton*, &c. prevailed still with the Queen to prohibit them; and they were loth to displease her, having had so great a Deliverance from Popery and Persecution by her Reign. The Lord *Verulam* (*Bacon*) tells us of a Reforming Act, in which himself had a hand, prepared in the Parliament, but prohibited by the Queen.

And if any Kings (who should no more divide from their Kingdom Real or Representative, than the Husband from the Wife, that I say not, Than the Head from the Body) should so far misunderstand their own, and peoples Interest, as to be jealous of Parliaments as their Enemies; and if Wise Kings desire to keep the Nobility from being (as *Henry* the Fourth, *Richard Nevil*, and others have been) too strong for their Sovereigns, they cannot more cross their own ends, and serve the Ambitious Designs of these Men, than by afflicting a Great, a Sober, and a Religious part of the Kingdom, whom these Seditious Men will be still serving themselves upon, by pretending to Head them for their Deliverance; as many Factious

dious Nobles did in *France*. It s a great Encouragement to Rebellious Great Ones, when they have always hope, that a great Body of diſtreſſed Men, will be ready, as neceſſitated for ſelf-defence, to accept of their offers for Inſurrection, or at leaſt to ſtrengthen Faction.

L. *It is for all theſe very Reaſons that we would Deſtroy or Extirpate all Diſſenters, that they may not be the Serviceable Inſtruments in ſuch Deſigns.*

M. For all theſe Reaſons, you ſhould Unite on the Terms that Chriſt and his Apoſtles Inſtituted as ſufficient for Chriſtian Love, Communion and Concord, that there may be no diſtreſſed, exaſperated Diſſenters among us; or only ſo few and culpable by the groſſneſs of their Errors, as that their ſhame and paucity may render them no way dangerous. You ſhould not take ſuch Men of extraordinary Wiſdom, as Queen *Elizabeth*'s Councellors and Parliaments, the Lord *Bacon*, Judge *Hales*, and ſuch Pacificators as *Davenant*, *Hall*, *Chillingworth*, *Abbot*, *Grindal*, *Amycald*, and moſt of the *French*, *Dutch*, *German* Proteſtantts, to be all Fools, and you to be Wiſe Men. A Council in *Bedlam* could ſcarce adviſe a madder way to root out Faction, than to make Canons or Laws, that all the Kings Subjects ſhall be Extirpated, that will not Subſcribe. There is not one word in all the *Statute Book*, or the moſt learned *Law-Books* contrary to the Word of God; and that the *London Diſpenſatory* hath no Error in Medicine; and that no Licenſed Book hath any Error in Divinity: Verily, if the Biſhops and Clergy of *England* cannot give us better proofs of their Infallibility, or that their publick impoſed Books are as free from Errors as *Adam* was before his Fall, that by making all Subſcribe, or Swear, or declare in the Church that *it is ſo*, Cowards may ſay, *your Lordſhips and Reverences have never an Erroneous word*, but few Men will believe it ever the more; yea, it will be the *leſs believed*, that needeth ſuch a proof as this: Even as men would take him to be never the more an unerring Phyloſopher, Lawyer or Phyſician, who could force all the Apprentice Boys and Women in the Town, to Swear that he is ſuch.

Try firſt to make all the Kings Subjects of one Opinion in all points of Learning, Law, or Trading, and of one degree of

of wit, and of ſtature and complexion, and then hope to make them all of one meaſure of underſtanding, not only in the ſubſtance of Religion, but in all the little things that Biſhops call indifferent, and do or may impoſe.

L. *But you run upon the Errour that all muſt have ſo great knowledge according to our rules, as to know the Lawfulneſs of all Lawful things: We know no Church-men reach ſo high: But the way to Concord muſt be by obeying the Church in all caſes that are doubtful to the Subjects.*

M. 1. It's well that you limit it to *doubtful Caſes*: But what if I am paſt all doubt (*e. g.*) that it is a ſin to make our ſort of God-fathers the vowing Covenanters in Baptiſm, excluding the *Parents*, to caſt out all from Chriſtian Communion that ſcruple kneeling in the reception, to deny Chriſtendom to all that refuſe our God-fathers and Croſſings, to pronounce all in *England* at Burial ſaved, except the unbaptized, excommunicate and ſelf-murderers, to profeſs that [*It is certain by the word of God that Infants* (excepting none) *baptized and dying before actual ſin, are undoubtedly ſaved*; *To aſſent to a falſe rule* to know *Eaſter-day*] with many ſuch: What muſt I do in ſuch *undoubted Caſes?*

2. Tell us plainly, Is it *all doubted caſes* or *ſome* only, in which you ſay we muſt obey? If not all, till you tell us which, and how to know them, you talk in vain. If all, what if men doubt whether Polygamy, Lying, Fornication, *&c.* be lawful? Or what if a Papiſt doubt whether King-killing be lawful, and the Clergy command it, muſt it therefore needs be done?

3. And I pray you tell us *where* and *when* it is that men muſt obey this rule? Was it a duty in *England* in the days of *Thomas Becket*, *Anſelm*, *Dunſtan*, *&c.* or in the Reign of all the Kings that were Papiſts? Is it a duty now in *France*, *Spain*, *Italy*, *Bavaria*, *Auſtria*, *&c.* or in the Dominion of the *Turks*, *Perſians*, *Tartarians*, *China*, *&c.*? Muſt all Subjects every where do all commanded them? If they have but ignorance enough to be in doubt themſelves, ſure they are bound to receive God's Light to overcome thoſe doubts, and in Errour it is not obedience in Evil, but ſeeking truth till they find it, that is their duty.

But

But if you limit this Rule to Christians, is it to all *Christians*? If to *Orthodox Rulers*, are the Subjects any fitter to judge whether their Kings and Bishops are Orthodox or not, than whether the things imposed be good or bad? If you dare say, That all Subjects are bound to be of the Religion which their Kings or Bishops say is right, speak out and you will need no confutation.

It's granted by all sober men, that as Rulers have the judgment of publick decision, so every reasonable man must judge by *private discerning* whether his Actions be agreeable to God's Commands or not. It is not Brutes and Infants, but Men that have the use of reason, that Kings and Bishops rule.

4. But if you are stiff in the contrary Opinion, that all men must implicitely believe the King and Prelates, in all that ignorance can but make them doubtful of, I hope you have more Brains than once to dream, that ever you shall bring all the Kingdom to unite in this opinion, and to lay by their reason, and confess themselves Ideots or Brutes, that must not labour to know whether they keep or break God's Supream Law; or if you must rule men on these terms, you must keep them in fetters, and not at Liberty.

And I pray you dishonour not the King so much, as to make him a King of Beasts and Ideots, and not of Men or Christians; or at least expose him not so much to the power of Usurpers, as to say that his Subjects are not the *Discerning Judges*, who is their True and *Lawful* Soveraign, and who *not*; and if they must judge whether all their actions be agreeable to the *Kings Laws* or *not*, lest they be hang'd or punished; allow them also to judge whether or no they be agreeable to God's Law, lest they be damned.

If men once believe that God is not their Supream Governour, no wonder if they believe that Kings have no Governing right, nor any are abound in Conscience to obey them; for who can *give Governing Authority*, or who can *bind Conscience* to obey it, but the absolute Soveraign, the Almighty God?

L. *Experience confuteth all that you have said; what Countries live in greater Unity, than those that have procured and kept it by violence, and do endure no Dissenters; as* Spain *and* Italy?

M. It seems you know not what you say. 1. The *Pope* and *Spaniards*, and *Italians* allow greater differences, by many degrees than those that you condemn Dissenters for; their *Jesuits*, and *Dominicans*, *Thomists*, *Scotists*, *Nominals*, *Durandists*, &c. differ so much from each others in Doctrinals, about God, and Grace, and Free-will, and Providence, and the Cause of Sin, and many other points, that the Volumes they have written for their several Opinions, make up huge Libraries, which employ the hard studies of the most Learned men in the World, and are as far as ever from being ended.

2. The *Jansenists* and *Jesuits* differ, not only in such Doctrines, about Predestination, Redemption, Grace, Free-will, Perseverance, *&c.* but also about abundance of Doctrines, commonly called Moral; as about Murder, Perjury, Fornication, Stealing, *&c.* as you may see in the Books lately published by the *Jansenists* against the *Jesuits*.

And though approved general Councils, have made the doctrine of Deposing Excommunicated Princes, and Absolving their Subjects from their Allegiance, and giving their Dominions to others, to be a very part of their Religion, yet are not the Papists agreed in it; but the *Germans* in the days of the Emperours, *Frederick*, *Otho*, *Henry 4th.* and *5th. &c.* and the *French* to this day much against it. And what Learned men wrote against it, read but *Mich. Goldastus* his many Volumes of Collections, and you may see.

Yea, the Papists are not agreed of the very essential Form and Constitution of their Church, and therefore are indeed of several Churches: One Party thinks that the Supremacy is in the Pope, another that it is in a General-Council, and a third that it is in the Pope and General-Council agreeing; and yet all these so far bear with one another, as to cover over the difference with the *Name* of one *Church*, and to repute each other as True Roman Catholicks.

Yea more, it is by an *Allowance* of Dissenters, or different ways of Worship, that the Pope doth chiefly keep up his Kingdom. When any Religious people have fallen into a dissatisfaction with the loose Discipline and Conversation of the Bishops and their Churches, the Pope alloweth them to set up by themselves, and exercise a stricter Discipline, Wor-

ship,

ſhip, and Converſation of their own deviſing, which he alloweth, and no Biſhop ſhall have power to impeach. And thus he keepeth them in dependance on himſelf, as the only Defender of their Humours, inventions and liberties of different ways.

On ſuch accounts, there are multitudes of Sects among them under the name of *Friars*, and *Fathers*, and *Siſters*, &c. The *Benedictines*, *Auguſtinians*, *Dominicans*, *Franciſcans*, *Jeſuits*, *Carthuſians*, &c. And all have their ſeveral ways of Diſcipline; but it ſufficeth, that all depend upon one Pope.

In *Rome* it ſelf, *Philip Nerius* being a Serious Religious man, was unſatisfied with the dead formal way of the Biſhops and Maſs-prieſts; and to bring men to knowledge and ſerioufneſs in Religion he borrowed a Church, and ſet up a Lecture or Courſe of Serious Extemporate Worſhip, almoſt like the exerciſe called Prophecying, that Arch-Biſhop *Grindal* was for, and the Lord St. *Albans* (*Bacon*) writes for. Four Zealous men ſpent the whole day; one in Extemporate praying, and one in Preaching and Expounding Scripture, and one in telling the people the Hiſtory of the Church, and the Lives and Miracles of Saints, and one in praying again, juſt like thoſe here hated as Extemporate Puritans. The Biſhops ſaid they were proud Hypocrites that drew crowds of people after them for reputation of Sanctity; and they perſecuted *Nerius*, and accuſed them to the Pope, and ſilenced him: The ſilencing Biſhop was preſently ſtruck with death, and *Nerius* went on, *Baronius* being his ſecond. The crafty Pope, inſtead of calling them Fanatick Rogues and Rebels, thinks it policy to turn this ſtream of pious Zeal into his own channel, to drive his own Mill; and he reſcueth them from the Prelates, and alloweth their Exerciſes, and calleth them by the name of the *Oratorians*, and honoureth the leaders, ſo that he drew them to depend on him, and *Baronius* to write thoſe many great Volumes of Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, which have done *Rome* greater ſervice than any one Writer that I know of in the world; and to this day the *Oratorians* are the moſt ſober Puritan Papiſts.

Thus did he make uſe of the *Sectarian* ſingularity of *Ignatius Loyola*, a Souldier turned to Superſtition, allowing them (as others) to ſet up by themſelves from under the power of

the Bishops, in dependance on the Pope alone, whereby he hath mastered Emperours, and Kings, and Kingdoms, and made great attempts on *Abbassines*, *Greeks*, yea on *Congo*, *Japan*, *China*, and the *Heathen* World.

And I have credibly heard that Dr. *Tho. Goodwin*, *Philip Nye*, and Dr. *Owen* the Leaders of our *Independants*, did tell the King, that as the Pope allowed these orders of Religious parties in meer dependance on himself, without subjection to the Bishops, all that they desired was (not to be the masters of others,) but to hold their own Liberty of Worship and Discipline, in sole dependance on the King, as the *Dutch* and *French* Churches do, so they may be saved from the Bishops and Ecclesiastical Courts.

2. But further, Do you forget that the *Spaniards* by their Sacred Cruelty and Inquisition have lost the *Low-Countries*, and had almost lost the seventeen *Provinces?*

3. And do you not know that ever since the days that the *Arrian Gothes* possessed *Spain*, they have been like *Ireland*, a blind superstitious People, whose Ignorance most fitteth them for such a kind of Concord? And is there not a Concord in their way among the enslaved ignorant *Muscovites*, and among the *Turks*, and many *Heathens?* Satan himself is against the dividing of his Kingdom.

4. And do you think that the effect of *Spanish* and *Italian* Tyranny and Concord, doth answer the cost? The Cruelty of their Inquisition hath made their names as odious as of Cannibals or Wolves, insomuch that the Lord *Bacon* thought that an Invasive War against them as the Enemies of mankind, that violate the Laws of Nature and Nations, was just.

And the many Millions that they most cruelly murdered, and tormented in *Mexico*, *Peru*, *Hispaniola*, *&c.* (among whom were divers Kings) do tell the World what are the fruits of their Catholick Fury, and Arbitrary Government: The Archbishop *Barth. de Casa* and their Jesuit *Joseph Acosta*, Eye-witnesses of undoubted Credit, report that which renders them liker Devils than Men. And *Gage* that lived there among them, seconds it.

And it was no small infamy to their King *Philip* that he put to death his Son and Heir *Charles*. Are these tho patterns that you would have us imitate?

And

And as for *Italy*, 1. Read of all their Hiſtories, and then name that Countrey on Earth, if you can, that for many Generations, hath been inveſted with ſo much Civil War and Blood, as *Italy* hath been, yea *Rome* it ſelf. 2. And ſince Policy hath ſettled it of late in peace, what a peace is it, and of what effect? It is ſaid by Travellers, that no Countrey more aboundeth with *Atheiſts* and *Infidels*, that are indeed of no Religion. And truly, if it be God and Conſcience that you would have baniſhed out of *England*, and Infidelity, Saduceiſm, Hobbiſts, Maligni-ty, Drunkenneſs, Whoredom, Perjury, that you would have take the place, I dare ſay that the Devil will not fight againſt ſuch Concord, but will promote it with all his policy and power, by himſelf and all his Agents Eccleſiaſtical, Civil, and Mili-tary.

4. Yet further, Why look you not on all the reſt of the World, as well as *Spain* and *Italy*? Indeed *Japan* reſtored Con-cord, but it was by ſo deviliſh and cruel Torments of Chriſtians, and thoſe that would not accuſe them, as rendreth their names odious to Man-kind (of which *Varenius* will ſatisfie you.)

But what *France*, what *Ireland* and others have got by cruel-ty, I have told you before.

And though I am far from juſtifying the *Hungarians* (men that I know not, or their caſe) for flying to the *Turks* for help, do you think that the Countries now ruined by War, and the many thouſands in *Auſtria*, *Sileſia*, *Moravia*, and *Hungary*, killed and taken Captives, and the thouſands killed in Fight, and the Famine that the next year is like to come on the ruined Coun-tries, where Corn and Hay are all deſtroyed, and the Bloody War that is yet like to follow before the end; I ſay, do you think that all theſe are not a dear price to be paid, for *hindering men to Worſhip God only according to the Scripture*? Would leave to ſerve *God* only as Chriſt and his Apoſtles appointed and did themſelves, have coſt the Emperour and People, dearer than all this amounteth to?

5. And the World knoweth that (as *Cromwel* got his ſtrength and uſurpation in *England* by his Liberty of Conſcience, ſo) the *Turks* won *Conſtantinople* and the *Eaſtern* Empire, much by this. For when their Emperours were become diſſolute or cruel, kill-ing and depoſing one another, putting out their eyes, and thruſt-ing them into Monaſteries (forced Saints; and when Ambi-

tious

tious ungodly Bishops were still striving for Superiority, and persecuting Dissenters as not Orthodox, and Mutinous Souldiers pulling down Emperours, and setting up others, the poor Christians thought that to defend such a Government against the *Turks* that gave all Men the Liberty of their own Religion, would cost them dearer than it was worth; and so were the more remiss in their resistance, and the easilier yielded to the Conquerours: Whereas had the *Turks* done as the *Papists*, who make our extermination by our own Rulers, a very part of their Religion, the *Greeks* would have more resolutely resisted them, in necessary self-defence.

And did not the *Turks* still give Liberty to Christians (only restraining them from speaking against *Mahometism*) do you think that the *Greeks* in all their Dominions would no more strive for their deliverance? And that *Transilvania*, *Hungary*, *Walachia*, *Maldavia*, *Croates*, and *Cossacks*, *Armenians*, *Georgians*, *Cercassians*, *Mengrelians*, *Nestorians*, and *Jacobites*, in so vast numbers, would live so long quietly and patiently under them as they do?

All the great Conquerors of the World that are Famous in History, ever observed that sober policy, to let *Conquered Provinces enjoy their own Religion, and mostly their own antient Lawt and inferiour Magistrates:* And then the people find the change so tolerable in the Supremacy, as they the more easily yield, with less resistance, and continue their subjection with the greater quietness and peace.

The *Jews* in Christ's time, (and till they Rebelled afterwards under *Vespatian*, *Titus* and *Adrian*) had so much of their own Religion and Law allowed them, as was no small cause of their Crucifying Christ, lest the name of a King sent from God (such as they expected the *Messiah* to be) should draw the people to such Insurrections, as should provoke the *Romans* to deprive them of their Temples, Religion and Laws, and to destroy their place and Nation.

And I hear by Travellers, that where the *Turks* yet allow their provinces (as in *Transilvania*) their own Magistrates and Laws, Religion prospereth almost as weil as under Christian Sovereigns, and far better than under the extirpating zeal, or rather fury of persecuting *Papist Princes*. I desire you therefore before you plead experience for your desolating way of Concord, or study

History

History better, and be better informed of the Case of the World.

When I think but what men Bishop *Wilkins* and Judge *Hales* were, that on my knowledge, drew up an Act for the total cure of our *English* Church differences, (to which those called to it by the Lord Keeper *Bridgman*, did on both sides consent) I have thought it some defect of Humility in some Clergy-Men, that took themselves to be so much wiser than these rare and excellent Men, as to Judge that our distractions, sufferings, and dangers by divisions, are not so bad as the effect of these Mens Council would have been.

But I do with greater confidence ask you, whether those men seem to be serious and understanding Christians, who think all the Bloody Wars, and tormenting Inquisition, and the destruction of Love and Justice, and good Works, which are caused by Church-divisions in the World, to be a less mischief than it would be, to *ENDURE CHRISTIANS TO SERVE GOD JUST AS CHRIST PRESCRIBED BY HIMSELF AND HIS APOSTLES, AND TO UNITE ON THE TERMS ONLY WHICH HE AND THEY DID ORDAIN AND PRACTICE?* Shall we tell *Turks* and *Heathens* that it is no wiser a Saviour that we trust in, and no wiser a Heavenly King that we obey? And no wiser Law and Gospel that He hath left us? And is it any wonder than if they scorn both Him and us?

L. *You are too hard for me, I will talk with you no more.*

M. It is Truth and Light that is too hard for you; and woe to the Foolish Enemies that are too hard for it, and overcome themselves, and their own happiness and hopes in overcoming it. And woe to the World, to Churches and Nations where such prevail.

L. *But I advise you, that you never think that all your Truth and Reason will do any great good on those that are against you: For you cannot have while to say all this to many that you have said to me; and if you should Print all this, the contrary will scarcely read the Title page or Contents, but scorn it before they know what you have said; and if they read it, it will be all the way, with a Militant Spirit of prejudice and hatred, and only study what to say against it; and Ignorance, Passion, Interest and Prejudice, will answer*

answer all with Rage and Confidence, and only conclude that the Author is a Fool, or Rogue, or Rebel; and, it's like enough, answer you with an Excommunication, or Goal, where among Malefactors you shall live and die. If you speak for, and not against their pre-conceived Opinion and Interest, they will hear you; but if you speak against any of their Worldly Wealth, or Honour, or Grandeur, you may almost as hopefully dispute an hungry Dog from his Carrion; and you must not wonder if they snarl, or fly upan you and tear you. And though I confess, that all your Proposals seem very consistent with your Antagonists Wealth and Greatness, yet rememmber the truth of Seneca's *words, That* Men that have a sore, do not only start and complain when they are toucht, but even when they think that they are toucht, though it be not so. *There is no expectation of Justice from* suspicious Jealousie; *much less if it be animated by* Interest *and* Malice.

M. My expectations are not much higher than your description. But when my own life is so constantly a painful burden, and I am so near the Grave, I am utterly unexcusable, if I think so short and painful a life too good to Sacrifice by way of Obedience to the Will of God, who hath long and wonderfully preserved it; and if I do not live and die with St. *Paul*'s Resolution, *Acts* 20, 23, 24. *Bonds and Afflictions abide me, but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto my self, so that I might finish my Course with Joy, and the* Ministry *which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testifie the Gospel of the Grace of God.*

And indeed, if all our bad Laws and Ceremonies were reformed, and all granted therein which I have proposed, alas there is so much to be done for the Reformation of the *Persons* that must Execute good Laws, (Lords, Bishops, Patrons, Priests, *&c.*) without whom Laws are but a dead letter, and against whose enmity and oppositions, they are unlikely to prevail, that I die the more willingly, because I see no appearance of any such Golden Age, or amiable Reformation, and general Concord, as might tempt me to desire to live much longer on Earth. The Reformation of our Universities, Clergy, Nobility, Gentry, and licentious Youth, and Malignant Haters of serious Godliness: is a work for Omnipotency, and would afford me matter for a Volumn, were I to write

on

on such a Text as *Ezek.* 37. 3. *Son of man! can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.* In the mean time it giveth me matter for Groans, Tears and Prayer, but no belief of that goods man's Prophecy, who confidently foretelleth us of that Blessed Age, about eight years hence. If the Second Part of my *Moral Prognostication* (written with more doubt than hope) should prove as true as the First part did (of this Progress of Malice and Divisions) I doubt it is but some small Rudiments or Preparations for such a Blessed Change, that the men of the present times must see. I should rejoice if They (I mean God by them) confute my fears.

CHAP. LXII. *Fifty Questions to unjust Silencers.*

GOD IS LOVE AND HE THAT DWELLETH IN LOVE DWELLETH IN GOD, AND GOD IN HIM, John 4. 16. The most fundamental and Comprehensive Article of Natural and Evangelical Religion.

How Angels fell from Love and became Divels, malignant Spirits, is not revealed fully to us; but that such there are, both Scripture and too great Experience certify us. But how Man fell, is told us in the Scripture. It pleased God to make a rank of intellectual Animals left to their understanding, self-determining free-will, between the Brutes which are determined to things Sensible, and the confirmed Angels who are determined to things Spiritual. It pleased him to oblige and allure Man by his Blessings, to live still in the love of God; but withal to permit the malignant Temper, to try whether by his allurement and deceit, he could win him from this Holy Love: As if a man should leave his Daughter to be his wife, who could win her own consent. The malignant Spirit prevailed and turned man from the Reigning Love of God, to the Love of S*ELF*, Self-pleasing, Self ruling, and Self trusting; and having won man's *Will* he is by just permission become his prince, as long as he can keep the *Will* which he hath won. But *Infinite LOVE*, first promised, and then gave his S*ON* to be the *PRINCE OF LOVE*, and so the Captain of our Salvation; His Incarnation, Doctrine, Life, and Suffering his Resurrection, Ascension, intercession and Government, are but the works of L*OVE* for Man's Salvation, which is, to re-

cover the *Will* of Man to the Reigning Love of God, from the Carnal Sensual self-love. A war is thus commenced between *Christ* and *Satan*; Christ's warfare is to Conquer malignant *Enmity*, and set up a Kingdom of Love. The Devils work is to assimilate man to himself, and to make him a *Lyer*, *Malicious*, and a *Destroyer*. Thus two Kingdoms are set up in this World, which are in continual war against each other. The Subjects of each are discernable by their works: *TRUTH*, *LOVE*, and *DOING GOOD* are the works and marks of the one; and *LYING*, *HATRED* and *HURTFULNESS*, are the works and marks of the other; and *HOLINESS* and *DEVILISM* constitute this world. *Cain* and *Abel* were the leading instances: *Heb.* 11. 4. *By faith Abel offered a more excellent Sacrifice unto God than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was Righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it, he being dead, yet speaketh.* He conquered, but died, as did our Saviour, 1 *John.* 3. 12, 14. *Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his Brother; And why slew he him? Because his Own works were Evil, and his brothers Righteous*: In this warfare we must live and die. *Marvel not my Bretheren if the world hate you*; though we die as *Abel*, *we know that we have passed from Death to Life, because we Love the Bretheren*: *He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death*, though as *Cain*, he kill and seem to conquer. All that believe not a better life, which will abundantly make up the loss of this, are his subjects who is called the *GOD OF THIS WORLD*, who blindeth the minds of unbelievers 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Devils are called, *The Rulers of the Darkness of this world*, *Eph.* 6. 12. The Princes who set up a Worldly interest, against or above the Heavenly interest, are called, *The Princes of this world, that come to nought*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 6. And to be Wise only for an interest, is, *The Wisdom of the world, which is Foolishness with God*,- 3. 18, 19. Thus Christ fighteth by *Love*, to win Souls to *love* for the Glorious World of Love; and the Devil by Malice to *destroy Love* and *separate* them from the God and World of Love, by fighting as Dogs about their Carrion, for their fleshly interest in this deceitful world; but the time is short, and the War will be short, but the Victory sweet, and the Crown everlasting.

And it is greatly to be considered, that as Christ's *Cause* & *Subjects* are contrary to the *Divels*, so also is his manner of *Fight* and *Conquest*. Christ and Christians fight not by *Wrath* and *Hatred* against

againſt their *Haters*, but by loving them as Men (and praying for them, even when they ſuffer by them: (And in this courſe it is, that they *are more than Conquerours*, Rom 8. 37. *And heap Coals of Fire on their Heads, which will burn them for ever that would not on Earth be melted by them.*

It ſeemeth a ſtrange thing to us to ſee the poor *French-men* come hither from their own pleaſant Land, in Raggs and Bodily Diſtreſs: And who expelleth them? And for what? Who cauſed all the blood and baniſhments that have been exerciſed on Chriſtians, ſince the Heathen Perſecutions? And for what? Who deſtroyed thoſe many thouſands of Chriſtians called *Albigenſes*, and *Waldenſes*, and *Bohemians*, in Hiſtory mentioned? And for what? Who ſet up the Inquiſition as againſt *Proteſtants*, and Tormented and Burnt ſo many? And for what? Who cauſed the *French* and *Iriſh*, and other Maſſacres and Murders? And for what? Who keep out Truth and Reformation from all Kingdoms ſubject to the Pope? It is men in the Sacred Offices, Eccleſiaſtical and Civil. we all own Reverence to Magiſtrates and Paſtors. Satan is not ſo fooliſh as to do his work in his own name, nor to put its proper name upon his work. Did you ever hear or read of Perſecutors, who openly ſaid, [*We are the Servants of the Devil, and come againſt you for his Intereſt and in his Name to perſwade or perſecute you from Chriſt and your obedience to God, and your Salvation?*] No, It, is as for wickedneſs, that wicked men deſtroy the juſt; and as for ſinning that they perſecute them that will not ſin: It is for Religion that Religion is impugned; and for the Church that the true Children of the Church are Perſecuted: And is it for the Goſpel that the Preachers of it are ſilenced and deſtroyed? Without the Church a falſe Religion is ſet up againſt Chriſtianity. But within it an Image of Chriſt, and of the Church, and of Concord, and Religion, is ſet up againſt *Chriſt*, *Church*, *Concord*, and *Religion*; and men in the Garb of Magiſtrates and Paſtors, do proſecute the War as by Chriſt's Commiſſion, and in his Name: And ſin is defended and propagated, by falſe, pretended oppoſition.

If the *Jews* had known him, they would not have Crucified the Lord of Glory. *Heathens* would not for Idols fight againſt God, nor *Mahometans* for a deceiver againſt Chriſt, if they knew what it is that they are doing. Chriſt who was Crucified as a Blaſphemer and Rebel, foretold his Diſciples, that they ſhould be kill'd

as an act of service to God. Where the Gospel is beleived, it is a crime so horrid to silence and destroy Christ faithful Ministers, and forbid his publick Worship, and render his most conscionable Servants odious, and plot their extirpation and ruine, that none dare do it but those that know not what they do. When Christians as a Sect were every where spoken against, *Paul* was *exceeding mad against them, and persecuted them to strange Cities, and verily thought that he ought to do many things against the Name of* Jesus, *Act.* 26. But when he heard from Heaven, *Why persecutest thou me?* it stopt his rage, and changed his judgement.

But alas! How slender a means will serve to deceive the wicked? A meer nick-name, or malicious slander; yea the avoiding of a sin which they think to be no sin, is enough with them to make the best men seem the worst; while Perjuries, Adulteries, Blasphemies, Prophaneſs, Crulety and Persecution are tolerable motes in the eyes of their Companions. All the Holineſs, Wisdom and Mirales of Christ and his Apostles, would not serve to make them pass for good, yea or tolerable men; while Sadduces who denied Spirits & the Resurrection; & Ceremonious, hypocritical, blood-thirsty Pharisees, went for meet Rulers of the Flock. And how can it be expected that he who thinks not Holineſs desireable to himself, should think it any excellency in others? Or that he that thinks his own sin but a tolerable frailty, should much abhor it in the World?

Satan then hath his Army not only among Infidels, but nominal Christians: And it is commanded by Honourable and Venerable Names, and he pretends a good and righteous Cause, wherever he fighteth against Christ, and Holineſs. But by the fruits he may be known in the greatest pretenders, whatever names he call them by. It is the most profitable Preaching which he laboureth to suppress, and the most faithful Pastors that he would silence; the most conscionable Christians whom he striveth to make hateful, and the more Spiritual Worship of God which he would hinder. And therefore even among Christians we have great cause to warn men to fear least they be enticed into Satan's service, against Christ and their own Profession and Salvation. And especially in an age; 1. Where worldly and cross Interests are set up against the Interest of Christ and Conscience. 2. Where these worldly and cross interests have already

ready waſted Chriſtian Love, and Contentions have begun a Mental War. 3. When theſe have prevailed by ſcorns and ſlanders to make Conſcionable Chriſtians paſs for ſome contemptible, criminal, or erroneous Sect; and this Reproach is fortified by Honourable and Reverend Names. Leſt therefore ſuch Cauſes, too viſible in the World, ſhould draw the ignorant and raſh into the dreadful Sin of fighting againſt the Intereſt of Chriſt, and Souls, by hindering Chriſt's Miniſters from their neceſſary Work, and faithful Chriſtians from worſhipping God, I will humbly beſeech all that are in danger of ſuch Temptations, but ſeriouſly to exerciſe their own Reaſons in the preſent Conſideration of theſe following Queſtions and to take up with no other Anſwer to them, which will not bear weight at Death and Judgment, when worldly Pomp and Pleaſures leave them; and not worldly Intereſt, Wit, or Grandeur, but the Righteous Lord, the Lover of Holineſs, and Holy Souls, will be the dreadful and final Judge.

The Queſtions to be well Conſidered.

Queſt. 1. ARe we not on all ſides agreed that we are Mortals poſting to the Grave? Doth any Man think he ſhall not die? And is ſtriving or mutual Love and Quietneſs, a fitter Paſſage to the duſt? Do not all Men, conſtrained by natural Conſcience, at a dying Hour, repent of hurting others, and ask Forgiveneſs of all the World? Yea, if you are not worſe than moſt Heathens, Are we not agreed, That Man's Soul is immortal, and that we ſhall all be ſhortly in another World; and that it ſhall be with us there, as we live on Earth? If any doubt of this, ſhould not the leaſt probability of ſuch an everlaſting Life, of Joy or Miſery, prevail againſt the certain Vanity of ſuch a ſhadow as this World? Or if yet they believe not another Life, Why ſhould they not let thoſe live in quietneſs that do believe it, and dare not hazard their everlaſting Hopes for nothing, as long as they do no hurt to others?

Q. 2 Do not all Chriſtians beleive, That the Knowledge, of God, our Creator and Redeemer, and a holy Heart, and Life are of neceſſity to our Salvation? Do we not ſee, That Children are not born with Knowledge, nor free from fleſhly and worldy Inclinations? Doth not the World's Experience tell

us,

us, how hard, and how long a Work it is, to make the Ignorant understand the very Articles of Faith, and necessary Duty to God and man; and as hard to perswade their Carnal Minds to the hearty Love and Practice of them, and to save them from the damning Love of sinful *Lust*, and worldly Vanities; and how wofully the best Teaching is frustrate with the most?

Q. 3. Are we not all Vowed to God in our Baptism, renouncing the Seduction of the World, the Flesh and the Devil? And do all understand and keep this Vow? And is not the perfidious Violation of it, a most damning Sin? And when Thousands of full Age are yet to learn what Baptism is, and what they Vowed, Have they not great need to be plainly taught it?

Q. 4. Is a Baptized Infidel, or ungodly Person, any better or safer than the *Turks* or the Salvages in *America*? Will the Name of Christians save perfidious Hypocrites? Or, will it not be easier for *Sodom* than for such?

Q. 5. If Christian Knowledge and Practice be not necessary, why pray we for Conversion of Heathens and Infidels? And, why doth the Article of the Church of *England* condemn those that hold, That all may be saved in their several Religions? And what are we better than *Turks* and Heathens?

Q. 6. Are not all Men on Earth bound solemnly to worship the God that made them? And do not all the Idolatrous Heathens, and the Mahometans, offer their God some publick worship? And must not Christians publickly worship Christ? Are not holy Assemblies for Doctrine, Prayer, praise and Communion, Commanded to that end; and the Lord's day separated thereto, and all forbid to forsake such Assembling?

Q. 7. Let the Bills of Mortality, and the knowing Inhabitants tell you, whether there be not some Hundred Thousands in the great Parishes, in and near this City, more than can come into their Parish-Churches, and hear. If they would all but shew their willingness to come in, if they could, and Twenty Thousand stood at St. *Martin's* in the Church-Yard, and Streets, and as many at *Stepney*, and at St. *Giles Cripplegate*, and Ten Thousand at *Giles* in the Fields, and so of the rest, and should say, we are here desirous to come in, and cannot, what would you say to them? Are they not more miserable that are content to stay at home?

Q. 8. What would you have all these Thousands do? Multitudes

titudes of them are hardened already by this seeming necessity into self-excusing, and a custom of neglecting all publick Worship: And how think you do they spend their time at home? Is it not the time for sinful Practices, or Idleness at the best? And would you have all these Thousands turn Atheists, or live more impiously then Mahometans? And are not these to pay to the Church, that cannot come in it; and the Weak that cannot stand and can get no Seats? And are not the Church-wardens bound to present all these Thousands, that have no Room? And shall all these suffer as Recusants, while the Rich that can pay for Seats, escape? If you say they should seek room in other Parish Churches, do yo know what it is for a man to wander into the City, with his Family, to seek room he knoweth not where? The Tabernacles where Churches stood are small; and we see the Church full already, where is profitable preaching, and the Seats at least possest; and the worse men are, the more need they have, but the less they feel it, and are unlikely to seek help at such a rate, who would come in, if it were near them.

Q. 9. Are all these many Thousands that stay at home (or worse) hunted and prosecuted, fined, and imprisoned for it, as seditious, and Enemies to the King, or to the peace, as some are that worship God as wisely as they can? And do you believe that such a worship of God, as hath nothing in it contrary to the Holy Scriptures, or contrary to the Practice of the Apostles of Christ, is worse than none at all, or than meeting at Plays and Taverns, and deserveth scorn, imprisonment, and ruin?

Q. 10. Suppose it be Ignorance and Errour in such Ministers, as take it to be a sin against God (yea a heinous sin) to take all the Oaths, Declarations, Subscrptions, and Covenants imposed for Conformity (while they willingly take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy); and suppose it be an Errour in those People, who think their Souls need better pastoral Helps than they can have in many Parishes; shall this Errour be punished with keeping them from all God's publick Worship, unless they will sin against their Consciences, or change their Judgments which they cannot change? Yea, suppose some Communion or Ceremony be indifferent, which they mistake for sin, will you forbid all men to worship God, till they have no Sin or Errour? Is there any one such a man one earth? Are

you

you such your selves? And shall all the World be driven therefore from worshipping God? Little do men know how great a part of the daily Thoughts, even of Orthodox Learned men, are Errours.

Q. 11. Can there be a more horrid thing in the world, than either to condemn or excommunicate all men who dare not do that which after their best search, they think to be more heinous Sin than they dare name, lest the very naming of it offend, and are desirous to have their Reasons heard; and to make it necessary to Communion, or to their Liberty to worship God, that all Men and Women must know even all *indifferent* things, to be *indifferent* or lawful in God's Worship which men may impose on them? Have not all sober peaceable Divines agreed, that *things necessary for all to know* are *few*; and that Christian Concord can never be expected on any other terms, than by agreeing in those *few*, plain, necessary things? And who knoweth not that not *indifferent things* are *numberless*, as well as small; no mortal man knoweth them all? And if a poor Christian that feareth the Justice of God, do take that Oath, that Covenant, that Declaration or Subscription; yea, or that humane Symbolical Badge of Christianity, or other Ceremony to be a heinous Sin, which others say is a thing indifferent. Must all as Atheists be kept from worshipping God, till they know *all these things to be indifferent*?

Q. 12. Did not the Lord *Jesus* himself make it his prime Gospel Law, That all that profess Repentance and Faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, should by Baptism be made visible Christians; and all Christians live in Love to one another, and Holy Communion, and jointly worship God?

Q. 13. Was it not the Nature of all the Old Heresies to depart from this Universal Christian Love and Unity, and that on pretence of some singular Opinion of their own, in which they thought they were wiser than others, and would have had all to be of their mind; and should those that cry down Heresie, go the way of Hereticks, if they can but get *Number* and *Power* to pretend *Catholicism*?

Q. 14. Did not the Holy Ghost by St. *Paul*, as plain as the Pen of Man can write, determine, *Rom.* 14. and 15. and *Eph.* 4. 6. 7, *&c.* and 1 *Cor.* 12. that Christians should receive, each other into Communion, and live in Love and Peace, notwithstanding

ſtanding differences about Meats, Days, and ſuch indifferent things; yea, or Weakneſſes in Faith and Holineſs? And did not Chriſt mind the Ceremonious *Phariſees*, That *God will have Mercy rather than Sacrifice*; and that they worſhipped God in vain, while they preferred their Ceremonies and Traditions to his Word?

Q. 15. Had it been Reaſon, or Impudency rather, in the *Phariſees*, if they had cryed out againſt Chriſt and his Apoſtles, for not Conforming to their Traditions, [*You are Schiſmaticks, and diſturb the Churches and the Nation's Peace, and caſt all into Confuſion*]? And was it not Turbulent Arrogancy that made the *Jewiſh* Chriſtians ſo urgent with all the *Gentiles*, to be Circumciſed, when they were left to their *own* Ceremonies, and no body medled with them, or hindred them? If men love that Diet, let them uſe it. But muſt none live that cannot love the ſame?

Q. 16. Will you give men leave to open all the real Faults they can find in the *Dioceſan* or Pariſh-Churches? And if they prove far more than they can prove in theirs, Will you therefore ſilence all your Teachers, and ſhut up all your Church-doors, and give over worſhipping God? Do you think that your Prieſts and your Worſhipping are without Fault; yea, or the Conſtitution of your Churches? We are not able well to *know* what a Pariſh-Church is by its Materials; that is who are of the Churches, and who not. 1. If it be all the Baptized Pariſhioners, the papiſts and Separatiſts are your Members. If it be all ſuch as are of no other Church, then the Atheiſts, Infidels, Seducers, and others that are of no Church indeed are of it. 3. If it be only thoſe that dwell and communicate there, how ſmall a part of your great pariſhes are of the Church? Yet are not theſe many Thouſands declared to be out, but are permitted without Cenſure, and may come if they will: Not only the Members, but the Miniſter himſelf knoweth not who are of his Church, for the far greater part, till he ſee them come to the Altar, and then moſt, if they come muſt be utter ſtrangers to him whom he never ſaw before. How great a Number of *Hobbiſts*, Infidels, papiſts, and wicked Livers are amongſt us, your own *Pens* proclaim. And may not theſe come to the Altar when they pleaſe? This is ſpoken only to convince you, that if all this may be born, the ſuppoſed ſin of fearing ſin in a

thing call'd indifferent, deserveth not Excommunication or Destruction.

Q. 18. Is not *the fear of God the beginning of Wisdom*? And doth not this contain a Fear of sinning? And is not this commendable, and to be cherished? Is not God above man, and first to be obeyed, and most feared? Hath man any Power but what God hath given him, and hath God given any against himself, or his own Laws, or for destruction of his Fear? If *Conscience* towards God be once driven away, is any man to be trusted? Will not the unconscionable do any thing for worldly Interest?

Q. 18. Is it not an unmanly sort of impudence in them, that many years perswade the world, that those same men make Schisms, by forbearing only such things as they confess to be no sin, who have twenty years ago Protested, that nothing but *sinning* is refused by them, and did then give in a Catalogue of several sins which they undertook to prove such? And should those same men that have read, or may do *The King's Gracious Declaration about Ecclesiastical Affairs*, 1660. and the *London* Ministers printed Thanks-giving for it, and the many late Books, in which we have told men what it is which we dare not conform to; I say, should these still take on them, that they cannot know it, and call out still, [*What is it that you stick at? And What is it that would satisfy you?*] Yea, those that cannot bear that we should tell them.

Q. 19. Do you think that the King who then past that Declaration (in which the Non-Conformists who sought it with thankfulness acquiesc't, as in terms of happy concord) and the House of Commons who gave him thanks, or the Bishops and Clergy who after rejected it, and procured the new Act of Uniformity and such other, did take the way to have United Protestants, and to have prevented our present sad divisions?

Q. 20. Hath not Dr. *Burnet* in his History of the *Regale* fully proved that the choice of Bishops and Pastors for many hundred years was in the People and the Clergy: And do you think in your Consciences, that if a good Gentleman build and endow a Church, all men must ever after trust the Pastoral conduct of their Souls with such Priests only as his Posterity, or any man that will buy the Advowson shall present? Will not Drunkards, Fornicators, malignant haters of Holy Life choose men as fit for their turn as will be admitted? And do you think in your Consciences

ſciences that all the Patrons now in *England*, are either ſit, or by Chriſt allowed, to be chooſers of all thoſe Paſtors that all men in *England* muſt take up with : Do you not know that Preaching converteth not like a Charm, nor is the Divel caſt out of Souls as by the words of an Exorciſt? It requireth great skill and care to convince ſinners, and inſtruct, reſolve, confirm and comfort Souls : There is a great difference of Teachers as of Phyſicians. And Souls are unſpeakably more precious than Bodies. And it's ſaid of (too many) raſh and unskillful phyſicians, that the difference between them and Souldiers is that *they kill their Friends who pay them for it, when Souldiers kill but their enemies.* What Power Princes and Patrons have of things Dedicated to God, as Temples and Tithes, Lands ; we preſume not to diſpute. But theſe are not to inſeparable from the Paſtoral-office that the People muſt truſt their Souls only on their paſtoral care, to whom the patron will give the Tithes and Temples Had men ſo ſettled maintenance on Phyſicians for every Pariſh, we would not therefore truſt our lives on the unskillful or negligent, becauſe either Prince or Patron chooſe him. And if you would not ſay to ſuch, *You ſhall have the Phyſician which the Patron chooſeth or none.* Why ſhould you ſay ſo of the Paſtor?

Q. 21. Are we not of the ſame Religion with the Magiſtrates and Biſhops? In what one Article of Faith do we differ (except the new one of *the undoubted Salvation of all dying Baptized Infants*, not excepting thoſe of Atheiſt or Infidels, and this as *certain by God's Word*,) almoſt all parts of the Chriſtian World, *Greeks*, *Papiſts*, *Proteſtants*, *Neſtorians*, *Jacobites*, *Arminians*, *&c.* do charge one another with Hereſy or falſe Doctrine, while Conformiſts charge no ſuch thing on the Non-conformiſts, but only diſſenting from the modes of worſhip and Diſcipline which they impoſe. And would you have all the Chriſtian World, forbid one another to Worſhip God, till they all agree? If not, where yet their differences are ſo Great, why muſt they be forbidden it, who differ not in points of Faith from the Churches Articles at all?

Q. 22. It is forbidden that more than four meet to Worſhip God [*in other manner than according to the Liturgy and practice of the Church of* England.] If by [*other manner*] be meant [*with any other poſitive manner of Worſhip*] I ſee none that do it *otherwiſe.* For *Reading of Scriptures*, *Praying*, *Preaching*, *Singing*

Psalms, are all done in the Parish-Churches. But if [*other manner* extend to every *omission* of any appointed part of the Liturgy, all *Parish-Churches* where I come do it in *other manner*.] And shall all the Lords, Gentlemen and People be therefore punished as Conventiclers? The *Non*-conformists where I come, use most of the Liturgy, (that is) The *Psalms*, two *Chapters*, the *Lords Prayer*, the *Creed*, the *Commandments*, the *Singing Psalms*, and some of them more. Must all go out of the Church, if the Curate omit part? If by [*otherwise*] be meant [*with any other accidents or circumstances*] the Church of *England* agreeth not in all such, and can be no rule therein to the Non-conformist: Cathedral and Parish-Churches differ: Some Parishes have Organs, Altars, Rails, *&c.* and some none: *S*ome Worship in Tabernacles, and some in unconsecrated places, (as some Chappels, the Spittle, the Prison, *Sturbridge*-Fair, *&c.*) And almost all the Christian Sects on Earth (before-named) differ in far greater matters than our difference from the Liturgy is: And even in the time when the Christian Emperours and Prelates were of greatest power and Zeal for Concord, they never appointed one Liturgy for all the Churches in the Empire. Nor did any Bishops in Council or out, so magnify themselves, as to write down for all other Bishops and Priests the words which they must speak to God in all their prayers, as if none that are fit for the Sacred Office, knew what to say to God but they, or they only had the Spirit of prayer?

Q. 23. Are there not some sorts of Government antecedent in order of nature to publick Government, and such as no Prince or Prelate can abrogate, *viz.* 1. Self Government. 2. The Husbands-Government of the Wife. 3. And the Parents-Government of his Children, in order to personal and family welfare? If princes or patrons on what pretence soever, would take on them to choose for all men, what Food they shall eat, what physick they shall take and when, what Trade they shall choose, what Wives or Husbands they shall have, as to individuals, and what Food, Raiment, physick or Calling, they shall give their Children, *&c.* No prince can deprive men of Self-governing, maternal or paternal power. And is this power more concerned in any thing than in the saving of our Souls? Hath God laid our Salvation on princes, and patrons choice, or on our own? If we miscarry by their choice will they be damned for us, and not we?

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Is it not our own Salvation that lieth on our actions? And if another say, *you are unfit to judge*, what *Food to eat*, what *Physick to take*, what *Wife to Choose* and so what *Pastor to choose for the conduct of your Souls*; will any man, not distracted, therefore make a Prince or Patron the absolute chooser, and trustee for his Soul? Or doth it follow that *I need not* or *may not* choose a skillfuller Pastor than many thousand Parishes in *England* have, because the Patron is by Law enable to choose the Parish Priest? Let him choose who shall have his Tithes and Temple, but he shall not make me trust an unfit man with the pastoral care of my Soul.

Q. 24. If Wife or Son say, *My Husband*, or *my Father commandeth me to take this man and not that for my Pastor.* And you, say (*The Prince* or *Patron chooseth you another, and will imprison you if you submit not to his choice,*) which do you think the Law, of Nature, and the fifth Commandment will justify? Hath God made the King of *France*, *Spain*, *Portugal*, *&c.* the chooser of a Pastor for all their Subjects? And consequently the chooser whether they shall be saved or damned, according to God's ordinary course of Working by the aptitude of means. If this power extend not to *Infidels*, *Heathens*, *Papists*, *Hereticks*, *&c.* how shall the Subjects know to whom it extendeth? Must all Subjects be made Judges whether Princes and Patrons are Orthodox and fit to choose? Is not this more arrogancy, than to judge who is fit to be my pastor or Physician? Is it not sufficient that the Prince and patrons so provide for Teachers (and Physicians) that none may want, nor neglect instruction in the essentials of Religion; but as many as need and are able may use better than the unskilful at their own charges?

Q. 25. Whereas some pretend that we ought to be silenced for preaching without the Bishops Licence, is that the true cause, when such are silenced and excommunicated that have Licences? Mr. *Tho. Gouge* was excommunicated for preaching even in *Wales*, where he laboured in such eminent works of charity, notwithstanding his University Licence not-forfeited: For though he conformed not, he never *refused Conformity*, and so fell not under the Canon which maketh void Licences of Refusers. And I that have the Bishop of *London's* (*Sheldon's*) Licence, am hindered with the first. The same I say of Episcopal Ordination, which was no protection to him or me, or many others.

Q. 26.

Q. 26. As to the common cry that we are juſtly ſilenced for our being for the Parliament in the late Wars, 1. Is that the meaning of the Act of Oblivion? Are they friends to King or Kingdom that will not ſuffer our ſores to heal; but when all are returned to the Love of peace, ſtill fill mens ears with the noiſe and fears of War? 2. Did the King ſo judge of General *Monk* and his Army who reſtored him, who yet were hotly fighting in *Scotland* againſt the King, while we were preaching againſt the Uſurpers? 3. Do not our long requeſts yet ſilence theſe incendiaries, while we offer and crave but that thoſe may have leave to Preach Chriſt's Goſpel and Worſhip God, who never had to do with any War againſt the King, and that they ſilence only all the reſt, (which we ſuppoſe are a number not very conſiderable)?

Q. 27. As to any other charge, is it not that which we crave our ſelves, that if any Non-conformiſt be proved guilty of drunkenneſs, fornication, lying, perjury, oppreſſion, or other immorality or Rebellion or Sedition, they may be puniſhed as the crime deſerveth?

Q. 27. Do you believe that the great Pariſh Miniſters need no help? Can any Man think ſo, who believeth the worth of a Soul, and underſtandeth but one *half* a Paſtors work, and why it was that the Primitve Church had ſo many *Presbyters* and *Deacons* with a Biſhop, to Churches of ſmaller number by far than our great Pariſhes? And do not all Miniſters of ſenſe and ſobriety, confeſs their need of many to help them, and ſay that it is the want of Maintenance that hindereth it? and if that be it, why may not we be endured to help them for nothing, while we Preach the ſame Goſpel, and ſubmit to beg our Bread? Doth helping them freely deſerve our deſtruction?

Q. 28. VVhom did Chriſt or any of his Apoſtles ever Silence, who Preached only ſound Doctrine, for any difference about Circumſtantials of mans invention? Or where did they ever Command or authorize any others ſo to do? Whom ſome would have Chriſt reſtrain ſome from uſeing his name who followed him not, he rebuked the motion, ſaying, *he that is not againſt us, is for us.* When ſome preached not ſincerely, but enviouſly, and contentiouſly, to add affliction to his bonds, St. *Paul* was glad yet that Chriſt was Preached, and profeſſed that he did and would rejoice therein, *Phil.* 1. 18.

Q. 29. Do

Q. 29. Do you think that any would Silence, Imprison or Prosecute Religious Christians, for things which they themselves call Indifferent, and others think to be great sin, if *they loved their neighbours as themselves, and did by others as they would have others do by them?*

Q. 30. Is not the Office of the Ministery to be *Stewards* of the house, *and misteries of God*, and to give the *Children their meat in season*, *Luk.* 12. 42. and to *teach men publickly from house to house*, Act. 20. And is it not a calling fixed during life and ability, not to be cast off at pleasure? And this in those that are called by men? As a Priest that hath marryed Persons cannot unmarry them, and the Arch-Bishop who may Anoint or Crown a King, may not Depose him, because he was not the Donor or Lord, but a Ministeral Invest; so he that Ordaineth a Minister may not depose him, till he become uncapable of the Office, and if he do, it doth not disoblige the Minister.

Q. 31. Did not the Church for 300 years, worship God against the will of Princes, and afterward, when *Arrian*, or other erroneous Princes, forbid them? And hath a Christian Prince any more power to hinder the Gospel and Worship of Christ, and the saving of Souls, than *Heathens* had? or rather far greater obligations, as nursing Father to promote them, which I ask only in answer to such as pretend Law and human Authority, to forbid what God Commandeth; in which case saith Bishop *Bilson*, *we must go on with our work and patiently suffer.*

Q. 32. Is it not a dreadful charge that is laid on *Timothy* (one called by men) 2 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom, that thou Preach the word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long Suffering and Doctrine.* Have you so little mercy on our souls, as to drive us on such a Flaming Sword, and wish us to be condemned by Christ, for disobeying such a charger and to bid us obey any contrary charge of mortal worms?

Q. 33. Is the *Conformist Ministery* necessary or not? If not, why is all this stir made about it, and all the Church Lands and Tythes to maintain it? If yea, why then is not *our Labour* in Preaching the *same Gospel* as necessary as theirs, to such persons as cannot hear them for want of room, and to such who say that

their

their true neceſſity commandeth them to uſe better paſtors than many pariſhes have? And if any of them have a ſcrupulous errour about a paſtor, muſt they therefore be Ruined, Excommunicated or Forſaken?

Q. 34. Is not the ſilencing of faithful Miniſters a far greater loſs and hurt to the people that need their Miniſtry than to them? What if it prove my fault, that all my moſt impartial Studies and prayers did not ſerve to make me know, that all the impoſed Subcriptions, Declarations, Covenants, Oaths and practices are lawful? Shall hundreds or Thouſands of Innocent people ſuffer for my fault, and that in their Souls? Should you for this have deprived all perſons of any help, which they have had by all my preaching and Writings this twenty or Fourty years? And is it juſt to wiſh it had been all undone, and the like of many hundred others? If we preach falſe Doctrine, accuſe and puniſh us; If the phyſicians were drunkards or fornicators you would not for that forbid them to help to ſave the ſick. If the Country Farmers ſcrupled Conformity, you would not therefore forbid the Market to them, and let the poor famiſh.

Q. 35. If our not Swearing, not Subſcribing, *&c.* be our fault, as long as we preach Neceſſary Truth, could not Lovers of the Goſpel find ſome penalty for us, that did not hinder it? Is it worſe than Drunkenneſs or Fornication? Twelve pence an Oath, is thought enough for prophane Swearers, and is there one in many hundreds pay it? We had far rather be any otherwiſe puniſhed, ſo we be not hindred from ſerving Chriſt in the work to which we are devoted.

Q. 36. Do you think there is any ſuch ſin as Sacriledge in the world? If there be, is it not greater Sacrilege for me, that am Ordained and Devoted to the Miniſtery, to alienate my ſelf, than to alienate Church Untenſils, Goods or Lands? Theſe are devoted but for the Paſtor, who is Conſecrated to nearer and more holy ſervice. What think you of them that cry out againſt the alienation of large Church Revenues as Sacrilege, and uſe them for worldy pomp, and fleſhly fulneſs to their own pleaſure, which are devoted to God's ſervice; but with a few confident words will prove it no ſacrilege, for many thouſand faithful Miniſters, to forſake their Calling, if Biſhops forbid it them? (For what it is in the forbidders, we leave to God and them.

Q. 37. Dare

Q. 37. Dare you undertake to justify at the Bar of God, the many hundred Ministers frobidden to Preach, if they obey you and cease their Ministery? Or will you answer for all the People whom some drive a way from their worship of God, if they thereupon give over worshipping him, and as thousands others idle it at home, when all these say [*We Preach no Doctrine, nor offer God any Worship, contrary to any Word of God, or in any other manner than Christ and his Apostles did or allowed*]? Dare you give it under your hands that you will bear the punishment if we be condemned for obeying you and ceasing our work? If you would, were that man well in his Wits, who should trust his Soul on your undertaking, who are so unable to save your selves?

Q. 38. Should things Indifferent exclude things necessary, when Christ saith, *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice*? And is neither our Preaching, nor the concord of the Churches here Necessary?

Q. 39. Have you thought what Christ meant, when after his Resurrection he thrice saith to *Peter* (and to others in him) *Lovest thou me, feed my Lambs and Flock*? As if he had said, *As ever you loved me feed those whom I loved to the Death*: Would you unmercifully wish us to renounce our love to Christ? and *Paul* saith, *Necessity is laid upon me, and woe unto me if I Preach not the Gospel*: Would you wish us to run upon such a *Woe*, upon the meer chat of such as do but tell us, that we are not called as the Apostles; and that we are under Bishops? As if none but men called the *Apostles*, were liable to that Necessity or wo; or God had allowed us to forsake His Work when Bishops please, and will forbid us.

Q. 40. God hath encouraged us in our work by his undeniable blessing on many Souls. If you take it for nothing, for men to be turned from ignorance, worldliness, deceiving, lying, sensuality and fleshly lusts, to the serious belief of a life to come, and to the Love of God and Man, and to the joyful hopes of Glory, and the obedience of Christ, and confidence in his salvation; we take this to be worth our labour and our lives. And would you have us so unthankful to God, who hath blest us, as to cast away our Callings? Can you expect that all the threatnings of Men, or the weekly reproach of Pamphlet-writers, should make us wish all the Sermons unpreach'd which we have

preach'd, and all the Books unwritten which we have written, and all the Souls unconverted who have repented?

Q. 42. When *Jonas* over-ran an unpleasing Ministery, did not God overtake him with his Judgement? And if we prove *Jonasses*, may we not expect to meet with Storms more terrible than Jails?

Q. 53. Can all this said and done against such in the world, ever make the sober that knew them, believe, that such a man as *Anthony Burges*, Mr. *Porter*, Mr. *Hilderſham* (the Son) Mr. *Hughes*, Mr. *Richard Allen*, and hundreds much like them, were worthy Silencing, Imprisonment and Shame, while such as fill some thousand Churches are worthy of maintenance and honour? Or will sober Posterity who read the Lives and Writings of such men as *John Corbet*, *Joseph Allen*, *James* and *John Janeway*, and abundance such others, believe that they were as bad as their accusers make them? There is but one way to bring them under the Infamy and Odium of posterity; and that is the *Papists* way to kill all that are of another mind, and to drive Truth and Conscience ont of the world, and then who would stay behind?

Q. 44. Who did Christ mean by the Hypocrite that seeth a mote in his brothers eye, and could not see the beam in his own? Was it not the pharisee that blamed Christ's Disciples for crossing their Ceremonies and Traditions, and saw not all the crimes in themselves recited *Mat.* 23. And is not the scrupling of a thing called by others *Indifferent*, a more in the eye of many truly godly persons? I will not offend you by describing the beams.

Q. 45. Have we not often offered, that as soon as any true reason can tell us, that our Labours are here reedless, by the sufficient number, and quality, and labour, of others, we will joyfully be silent, and seek for work where there is need: Till then, to starve souls is be guilty of their damnation. And If Meeting-Chapels be wanting, why do not the great and rich Conformists build them?

Q. 46. Is it not a pleasing advantage to papists, if they can see two thousand of these Ministers, who are most against them, silenced and driven from Cities and Corporations, and made a hunting game and scorn, and the Kingdom crackt by general divisions, as turned into Guelphs and Gibelines, weekly reviling

and

and deriding each other as *Whiggs* and *Tories?* Is it not their design to banish *Conscience* and *absolute Obedience to God?* And you know who ruleth were God and Conscience doth not rule. And what is it that the unconscionable will not do, for worldy interest? And did not the papists always know that our Love and concord would be our strenght, and their terrour?

Q. 47. Who is it that was, or is able to cure all these our divisions? It never was in power, nor yet yet is, unless damning our souls by willful sin must be the cure, For we have oft offered our Oaths that nothing but fear of sin shall hinder us from conforming. If our fear come from ignorance, do the Churches suffer none more ignorant than we? But how easy were it with others without sin, or cost to cure?

Q. 48. Is it not God's great Mercy to our Land, that we have had twenty years peace, while other Lands have been miserable by wars? And if it be the preachers of the Gospel that yet will give the Land no peace, but cry out, *excute, prosecute, suffer not, strike home*, and their judgment be the executioners encouragement, who say, *The Clergy tells us it is our Duty*; I had rather answer them with tears than words.

Q. 49. Should not the long and universal experience of the Christian world be some warning to us which these thousand years hath been broken into shreds, by the contentions of the Clergy, and their Magisterial needless impositions, and by forsaking the primitive purity and simplicity?

Q. 50. Are not these words in the Liturgy before the Sacrament very terrible: " *If any of you be a hinderer or slanderer of* " *God's Word —— or be in malice or envy —— Repent of your sin,* " *and come not to this Holy Table, lest after the taking of the Sa-* " *crament, the Devil enter into you as he did into Judas, and fill you* " *full of iniquities, and bring you to destruction of Body and Soul?*

Are not the VVords of our Judge more terrible: " Mat. 25. *depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for* " *the divel and his Angels: For I was hungry,—thirsty,—a stran-* " *ger—naked,—in prison,* &c. *In as much as ye did it not to one of the* " *least of these, ye did it not to me: And these shall go away into* " *everlasting punishment; but the Righteous into Life eternal?* O let me never be one of those, who for nothing shall run on such a doom!

Q. 50.

Q. 50. If yet objections or the mis-understanding of our cause do frustrate all these reasons I have answered so many objections, and so far opened the cause already, as here is not to be repeated, *viz.* In the *First* and *Second pleas for peace*, In the *Apology for our Preaching*, and in the *Treatise of Episcopacy*

And against the judgement of those Reverend Fathers who still cry [*Abate nothing, and suffer them not; do Execution*] I set the judgement.

I. Of the King, 1. In his Declaration from *Breda*, 2. His healing Gracious declaration about Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1660. 3. And that of 1662.

II. The Judgment of the late House of Commons. *Jan.* 10 1680. " *Resolved that it is the Opinion of this House, that the* " *prosecution of Protestant-Dissenters upon the Penal-Laws, is at* " *this time grievous to the Subjects, a weakning the Protestant* " *Interest, and dangerous to the Peace of the Kingdom.*

III. Christ's Canon-Law, 1 *John* 4. 8, 16 *He that Loveth not knoweth not God, for God is Love : God is love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

Joh. 13. 35. *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.*

Rom. 14. 17, 18. *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost : For he that in these serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men.* vers. 1. *Him that is weak in the Faith, Receive we, but not to doubtful disputations*, &c.

1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. *We beseech you Brethern to know them which* LABOUR AMONG *you and are over you in the Lord, and to esteem them very highly in Love for their* WORK *sake, and be at Peace among your selves.*

1 Sam. 2. 30. *Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*

ENGLANDS SLAVERY.

Q. 1. IS not Silenceing taking all we have, and lying in Jaile among Rogues from six *Months* to six *Months* till we die, greater Slavery than the *Turks* inflict on Christians?

Q. 2. What is this for? And on what sort of *Men*?

Q. 3. Who be they that have caused and continued it after 27 Years Experience of the effects?

Q. 4. What is Diabolism if this be not?

Q. 5. Why is not publick Repentance of it proclaimed?